

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk October 23, 2016

Mid edition No 735

HERITAGE

Warning over deer on our roads

Motorists urged to take extra care during rutting season

TRANSPORT

Bridge of sighs?

Marking 25 years since opening of the QEII Bridge at Dartford

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Don't sleepwalk through council merger debate

YOU may be aware of informal talks currently taking place around the possibility of merging Dover, Shepway, Thanet, Canterbury and Ashford councils to form one organisation in order to allow all five to survive in the face of ever reducing central government funding.

For many, it's a debate which stimulates little interest at this stage - but its impact could be seismic.

Because while the creation of a 'super council' - and it is not yet clear whether this would be merely the same level of a borough or district, or indeed seek to become its own unitary, much like Medway when it broke away from Kent County Council's embrace - makes sense, it also raises a myriad of concerns.

We reported recently how bosses at the Marlowe Theatre are anxious about how a merged body would feel about subsidising such an artistic hub. It



Editor **Chris Britcher**

is concerned that while those at Canterbury City Council understand its importance to the city and its cultural offering, views may be very different for those living in Thanet or Dover who may ponder whether the money could be spent on more pressing social issues. And you can see both sides of the argument.

Yet that is likely to be the very tip of the iceberg. What is important or significant in one town, may mean nothing to another.

There is no denying the potential benefits of merging, not least what a combined effort could do to deliver a co-ordinated push to revive parts of the east.

Yet it is arrived through desperation rather than preference. Local people ruling on local issues is key to local democracy and if you feel that is important, it is never too late to start engaging with a process which could change that forever.

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Confirmed: Key colleges get set to formally merge

By Chris Britcher

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CANTERBURY College and East Kent College have agreed 'a merger in principle' following Canterbury's recent financial crisis.

East Kent College, which has its main campus in Broadstairs, but also runs sites in Folkestone and Dover, came to the rescue of Canterbury College when it was revealed it had huge debts and may struggle to survive.

Graham Razey, principal of East Kent, was drafted in to act as interim principal at Canterbury and the two governing bodies have worked closely as it sought to make £3 million in savings in just three months.

That has resulted in a number of job cuts, the scrapping of all A-level courses, and a view to share some administrative services.

Now the two governing bodies have separately agreed in principle the merger of Canterbury College and East Kent College.

There will now follow a period of planning and consultation with staff, students, and stakeholders of the colleges.

The two governing bodies will



REVIVED: Canterbury College has seen £3m of savings in the first three months under EKC guidance

also ensure they work to do due diligence to ensure a merger would be appropriate. They will also begin the creation of a 'shadow board' which comprises members of both Canterbury College and East Kent College's governing bodies.

East Kent College chair Beverley Aitken said: "We have seen a wide range of benefits since forming the partnership with Canterbury College, and our governors were minded to recommend we examine a full merger. While we have only

agreed a merger in principle, this decision does mean we can begin the long process of working to bring the colleges together."

The decision comes as the government gets ready to begin its area review process in Kent in November. This process has the stated aim of creating fewer, but more resilient, further education colleges.

Canterbury College chair Colin Carmichael said: "We've already seen significant efficiencies made

as a result of sharing an executive team, and parts of our corporate services. At this stage, it feels like the time is right to move forward with our planning, and look to bring the two colleges together."

Full consultations will be held, if a full merger is agreed, it is unlikely to be finalised until summer 2017.

MP's aide quizzed by police over 'rape' claim at Houses of Parliament

POLICE are continuing their investigations into an allegation a Kent MP's aide raped a woman in the Houses of Parliament in Westminster.

Sam Armstrong, chief of staff to Conservative South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay, was arrested last week.

The 23-year-old has been released on bail while inquiries continue into the incident, which is alleged to have occurred in the early hours of last Friday.

Police searched Mr Mackinlay's office in Westminster in connection with the allegation later that day, however, KoS understands the alleged incident did not occur in the office itself, contrary to some reports.

Suggestions of a 'police raid' on the office have also been played down.

A spokesman for the MP said: "On Friday morning, Mr Mackinlay was made aware of an allegation against a member of his staff."

"Following a request made by the police and parliamentary services he granted full access to

his Westminster office.

"Mr Mackinlay is currently awaiting further information from the police."

A Metropolitan Police spokesman said: "Detectives from the sexual offences, exploitation and child abuse command are investigating an allegation of rape at the Houses of Parliament in the early hours of Friday October 14.

"A 23-year-old man was arrested that same day on suspicion of rape. He has been bailed pending further inquiries to a date in mid-January 2017."

A House of Commons spokesman said: "We are aware of an incident on the parliamentary estate which is being investigated by the Metropolitan Police Service."

"Parliament is working closely with the police on their investigation and we cannot comment further while this is ongoing."

Neither Mr Armstrong nor Mr Mackinlay were available for comment this week.

Russian warships sighted off our coast en route to Syria

A FLOTILLA of Russian warships cruised along the Kent coast on Friday as they passed through the English Channel en route to Syria.

Royal Navy vessels were monitoring the warships heading to reinforce the attack on the besieged Syrian city Aleppo, with the Ministry of Defence saying they were "man-marked every step of the way" while near UK waters.

The Russian taskforce, including the aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov, had sailed through the North Sea to the English Channel, before heading for the eastern Mediterranean.

The UK's Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan, escorted by the frigate HMS Richmond, steamed from Portsmouth on Tuesday to track the Kuznetsov group.

Ukip lose seat in Medway after Reckless resignation

A SEAT on Medway Council vacated by the wife of former Rochester and Strood MP Mark Reckless, was comfortably won back by the Conservatives on Thursday.

The Strood South by-election was called by the resignation of Ukip's Catriona Brown-Reckless. She had won the seat in May 2015. Her husband sensationally

defected from the Conservatives to Ukip in 2014 and won back his seat that year standing for Ukip - before losing it in the 2015 general election to Kelly Tolhurst. He now serves on the Welsh Assembly.

Former Medway mayor Josie Iles polled 724 votes, Labour 521 and Ukip 480 to take the seat.

The turnout, however, was just 16.74 per cent.



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Jail for possession of sick child abuse images

A 22-year-old who claimed he was a vigilante paedophile hunter, has been jailed for 16 months after pleading guilty at Maidstone Crown Court to possessing extreme images of child sex abuse.

Liam Shorter, of Willow Park, Otford, later admitted he had a sexual interest in children.

Officers seized Shorter's laptop and tablet when they

executed a search warrant at his home address in July 2015, where they found a number of photos and videos of child sex abuse.

He was charged with three counts of distributing indecent photos of children and seven counts of possessing indecent photos of children and one count of possessing an image portraying sex with an animal.



FINALIST: Jane Beedle, left

Can Jane be crowned Bake Off champion?

BECKENHAM's Jane Beedle will be hoping to make history this week by being the last ever winner of the Great British Bake Off on the BBC.

The 61-year-old reached the final after patisserie week was watched by around 10.8 million viewers, which saw fellow contestant Selasi Gbormittah crash out at the final hurdle.

Now the garden designer will be going head-to-head with PE teacher Candice Brown and aerospace engineer Andrew Smyth hoping to be crowned the winner.

It will be the end of an era for the show which will switch to Channel 4 after this series and bid farewell to Mary Berry and presenters Mel and Sue. Only Wingham's Paul Hollywood will remain after the channel hopping.

However, Mrs Beedle faced heartache recently having lost her father.

She and her brother had to travel to his home in France to clear his home after he passed away.

The Great British Bake Off final takes place on Wednesday. Last year, it was the single biggest show on TV pulling in an audience of in excess of 15 million.

Meanwhile, Sevenoaks Apprentice star JD O'Brien survived another firing in the boardroom on the BBC show this week.

Furious Wells tears up out-of-court talks with ex-Dreamland owners

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE future of Dreamland remains uncertain after the leader of Thanet District Council this week tore up out-of-court negotiations with the site's former owners.

Earlier this month, KoS exclusively revealed Margate Town Centre Regeneration Company's (MTCRC) plans to develop housing and a "world class" open space on the site.

The former owners are locked in a legal battle with the council to secure compensation following the acquisition of the site through a compulsory purchase order (CPO) in 2014.

Bosses are seeking upwards of £15m from the council, whose assessment of the value of the land is believed to be "significantly lower".

MTCRC then offered to take back ownership of the site, plus a fee of £1m to end the dispute.

But while waiting for an official response to the offer, spokesperson



BATTLE: Chris Wells

Toby Hunter, said he was told by Ukup leader Chris Wells that he made "a big mistake going to the press", when he spoke to KoS, and would categorically not enter into any more negotiations with his company.

"He has a duty to do right by people elected to him and just because the press, and therefore the public, know, he seems to not want to negotiate," Mr Hunter told KoS.

"That's pretty amazing and seems at odds with his character; our conversations have always been cordial. "But he has now cut off all communication and told us to speak with the lawyers."

Cllr Wells confirmed he was no longer negotiating with Mr Hunter and MTCRC directly and again claimed "only a fool would discuss these in the columns of a newspaper".

He added: "Mr Hunter contacted me to ask if we wanted to have a conversation alongside the court process, then proceeded to place that information in the public domain at an early opportunity.

"I am not interested in Mr Hunter's political analysis, only in what's best for the people of Thanet.

"This is not a row, it's a process on which a decision will be made and it will take as long as it takes."

Your chance to have say on police strategy

MATTHEW Scott, Kent's police and crime commissioner, is calling on people to take part in a survey which will help sculpt the creation of a major document outlining the strategic priorities for the county's police force.

His autumn statement will influence the compiling of the police and crime plan which ends on March 31, 2017. The new one will run until 2021.

The Conservative, who replaced Ann Barnes earlier this year, said: "When writing a new plan I have a duty to consult with victims and the wider community, so I want to know what matters most to you. I would encourage everyone to take part. You do not need to provide a name or contact details.

"This short survey is only the first stage of a consultation process about policing in Kent which will continue throughout my term.

Deadline to complete the survey is December 2. A summary of views will be published on this website. To take part, visit the PCC website at kent-pcc.gov.uk.

Drive to increase the number of adoptions

COUNTY chiefs have made a fresh appeal for more people to adopt children to coincide with National Adoption Week.

Kent County Council is raising awareness of the children in its care who are looking for permanent families - particularly siblings or those with complex needs.

In 2015/16, 108 children were adopted from KCC's care and a further 29 have been adopted since April with 35 more applying for an adoption order.

Cabinet member for specialist children's services Peter Oakford said: "The challenge for us is finding the right homes for children who come from difficult backgrounds, who may be older, have health issues or developmental delay or need to find a family with their brothers or sisters.

"We have extensive post-adoption support, tailor-made to your family, which lasts throughout their childhood and beyond. When the right match is made, adopting a child brings amazing rewards."

Contact the Kent Adoption Service for more details.

Postcard campaign over weapons firm

CHIEFS at a major business park have defended an arms company which has come under fire from campaigners as it looks to expand into Sandwich's Discovery Park.

The East Kent Campaign Against the Arms Trade (EKCAAT) has made a number of recent demonstrations against Broadstairs-based Instro Precision, amid concerns it produces parts for drones used in military strikes.

Now, the group claims to have sent more than 200 protest cards featuring signatures from residents across the county, encouraging Discovery Park bosses not to host its business.

Bosses say they have received 120 postcards, which carry a photo of a distressed family inspecting drone damage in a devastated civilian home in Gaza, and the words "this is what drones do to homes. Don't give Instro a new home".

Discovery Park chiefs, however, maintain their belief Instro is a legitimate, reputable business operating within the law.

Zika fears dismissed despite tropical mosquito eggs find

By Tom Pyman

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FEARS of the Zika virus arriving in Kent have been played down after tropical eggs were found near Folkestone this week.

The infection – carried by mosquito – has caused a number of babies in South America to be born with underdeveloped brains.

And when some eggs were discovered in Stanford, caught in one of a number of traps to allow authorities to monitor such risks, residents became worried for their health.

However, both Shepway District Council and Public Health England have moved to quash their fears, insisting there is no current risk involved. In addition the eggs have since been cleared.

A council spokesperson said: "Following the discovery of some eggs of a mosquito that is not normally native to the UK, Public Health England has recommended that the council follow standard practice and carry out a treatment as a precaution to prevent the mosquito establishing.

"There is no risk to people's health or their family or pets from either the presence of the eggs or the eradication.

"The council's pest control contractor carried out a spray treatment of anywhere where the mosquito eggs were laid on Monday.



BUGS: Carried by mosquitos, Zika has caused major problems in South America

"Public Health England will continue to monitor as part of its routine surveillance."

Jolyon Medlock, head of medical entomology at Public Health England, added: "We regularly monitor mosquito species and look for any which are new to the UK.

"Through these activities we identified a small number of eggs from the *Aedes albopictus* [Asian tiger] mosquito in one trap in Kent.

"Enhanced monitoring of the area was implemented and no further evidence of this

mosquito has so far been found.

"As a precaution we advised the local authority to use insecticide as a means of control and will continue to monitor the situation closely through our surveillance system.

"There is currently no risk to public health in the UK."

Despite a wide distribution of *Aedes albopictus* in Europe there have been no reports of Zika transmission by *Aedes albopictus*.

Rail travellers take note of key closures

TRAVELLERS using the trains this weekend are being warned to check before they set out as four major London stations close.

As part of the long-running engineering work as part of the Thameslink programme, Cannon Street will be closed this weekend with services starting and terminating at New Cross or Charlton. On Sunday, Charing Cross, Waterloo East and London Bridge are also closed.

Station open again after £1.1m injection

SNODLAND Station's main ticket office opened again for the first time since 1986 this week after a £1.1m investment.

The works included refurbishing the building and extending the car park.

Passenger numbers have increased since a high speed service was added in 2009.

Countess set for visit

THE Countess of Wessex will be back in Kent next month as she opens a new maternity bereavement suite at Medway Maritime Hospital in Gillingham on November 1.

Sophie, who was raised in Brenchley, and trained as a secretary at West Kent College, will be guest of honour at the opening ceremony of the key new facility at the hospital.

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Medway among toughest in south east over school fines

MORE fines were issued to parents for unauthorised absence at school last year by Medway Council, more than most authorities across the south east, according to new data.

If a school notifies the local council a child has had unauthorised absence, the council can issue the parents with a £60 fixed penalty notice which rises to £120 if it isn't paid within 21 days.

Research obtained by law firm Simpson Millar found some 1,557 penalties totalling £93,420 were issued during 2015/16 in Medway, the third highest in the region behind Hampshire and West Sussex county councils. By contrast, Oxfordshire County Council issued just 69 fines.

Solicitor Julie Robertson said: "These figures are quite frankly



staggering. What one head teacher agrees are special circumstances, another doesn't. It is a postcode lottery. We need more consistency and, in some areas, more common sense."

A Medway Council spokesperson said: "In line with Department for Education legislation, education penalty notices are issued to parents following referrals from schools."

Council agrees site sale for housing development

COUNCILLORS in Tunbridge Wells have given the nod to sell off land in the town which could pave the way for hundreds of new homes.

A deal has been agreed with Berkerley Homes, subject to planning permission, for the Holly Farm site in Hawkenbury.

The 17.74 acre site off Hawkenbury Road and Maryland Road, had been used for allotments and grazing. Both have been phased out over recent months, and allotment holders offered alternatives.

Should the developer get the required planning permission to go ahead with the project, it will include homes and a new primary school - allowing for the relocation of St Peter's Primary.

The exact number of homes is

not yet known, but Berkerley is understood to already own adjoining land, allowing more development.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council leader David Jukes, said: "I am absolutely delighted that after a long period of negotiations we are finally agreed on the sale of our council owned land which will enable a much-needed new primary school to be built on that site. We would hope that a planning application will be coming in the very near future and if all goes to plan the school will open in September 2018."

Planning officer Jonathan Macdonald added: "In bringing this site forward I believe the council is making good use of its property assets."

Detective wins award

A FORMER Kent Police detective involved in some of the county's most high profile murder investigations has won a national award at the Police Federation's National Detectives Forum awards ceremony.

Dave Stevens, now retired, won the national services to detectives award.

Bridge work continues

A NUMBER of bore holes and pits are to be dug by the side of the road on Rochester Esplanade near the Bridge Chamber and castle as part of ongoing maintenance.

Works will run from today to November 6 in places as part of the work being undertaken by the Rochester Bridge Trust.

Pub's £275k fresh look

THE East Kent pub in Whitstable has reopened after a three month £275,000 refurbishment.

Dating back to 1802, the Shepherd Neame pub closed its doors six months ago. New licensee is father-of-three Philip Outram, who will run the pub with daughter Ruby.

Park makes the top 10

MOTE Park has been voted one of the nation's top 10 favourite parks after more than 30,000 voted for it in an online poll.

More than 1,700 Green Flag award-winning parks were eligible in the People's Choice contest organised by Keep Britain Tidy, with the Maidstone park flying the flag.

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1. Kent's heritage at risk

Historic England's latest register published

2. Wedding ring stolen

Platinum diamond ring stolen on train

3. Weekend rail changes

Up to four London stations will be closed

The Essential Guide:



...to Operation Stack

Everything you need to know about queuing lorries on the M20



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Sittingbourne's Shane 'Shakey' Byrne clinched a record fifth British Superbike Championship title last weekend. Photo by Simon Hildrew.

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Top Three Blogs



1. Is TV on its way out?

Have on demand services taken over?

2. School leavers aren't lazy

Leave those newly-employed kids alone

3. Grammar school risk

Is there too big a risk of a two-tier system?

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Who will win the Great British Bake Off?

- 1 Jane Beedle - 8%
- 2 Andrew Smyth - 23%
- 3 Candice Brown - 62%
- 4 I don't care - 7%

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TRIAL: A court artist's drawing of Stefano Brizzi as he appeared at the Old Bailey this week accused of the murder of Greenhithe police officer Gordon Semple, pictured below

Cop's body 'dissolved in acid bath'

Emily Pennink reports on the opening of the trial into the death of a police officer from Kent which started this week at the Old Bailey. **WARNING:** This article contains some disturbing descriptions...

ACOURT has been hearing grisly details of the death of Greenhithe police officer Gordon Semple as the trial begins of the man accused of killing him.

Stefano Brizzi is on trial at the Old Bailey accused of throttling the 59-year-old officer he had met on gay dating app Grindr and then attempting to dispose of the body in a variety of ways, including in an acid bath.

The jury were sworn in on Tuesday and the case got under way on Thursday. Mr Semple, who had served the Metropolitan Police for 30 years, was reported missing in April.

DNA from the alleged victim was found on the blade of a blender, cooking pot, chopsticks, chopping board and grease in the oven of the 50-year-old Italian's kitchen, the Old Bailey heard.

Investigators also found there were bite marks on a piece of bone recovered from the kitchen bin at Brizzi's home and evidence that one of his legs had been burned, the jury was told.

Prosecutor Crispin Aylett QC told jurors: "So, the defendant cannot have confined himself to dismembering Gordon Semple and disposing of his body either by acid in the bath or else in the dustbins.

"Instead, the prosecution suggest it would be open to the jury to find that the defendant cooked part of his body and ate it."

PC Semple, 59, was on duty when he arranged to meet Brizzi, via Grindr, for "hot, dirty, sleazy" sex on the afternoon of April 1.

Following the alleged murder, neighbours on the Peabody Estate in south London noticed a "revolting smell" coming from Brizzi's flat.

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk



On April 7, Brizzi was described by his neighbour Martin Harris as being "cool as a cucumber" when he stopped by to inform him police had been called "because of the stench", the court heard.

Two officers arrived to find bottles of chemicals scattered in the hall and "blue-green liquid" in the bath with "flesh-coloured globules float-

ing in the water", Mr Aylett said.

One of the officers looked inside a bin liner on the floor and saw a human hand and part of a spine, the court heard.

The defendant said he had HIV and had been told by Satan to "kill, kill, kill", jurors heard.

Talking to the officers at his flat, Brizzi allegedly said: "I was talking North & West

online about Satan as a fetish – and crystal meth takes me to Satan.

"I am from a Catholic family so when I found I was gay, I found out I was from Satan. I loved crystal meth and wanted to meet someone who talked about Satan."

He explained that he did not like Mr Semple, who had been fat and ugly, the court heard.

Brizzi later allegedly claimed he had disposed of some body parts he had been unable to break up by taking them on his bicycle to a quiet spot by the River Thames.

He allegedly told police he had been unable to dissolve the "flabbery" bits with chemicals and had tried to flush them down the toilet.

Asked what was still at the flat, Brizzi said there was a foot, hand and leg "which I tried to roast as well", the court was told.

PC Semple's head was also at the flat but Brizzi flushed the lungs down the toilet, the court heard.

A human foot was later discovered by the Thames riverbank at Bermondsey Wall and body matter recovered from drainpipes in Brizzi's block.

Officers returned to the flat days later and recovered from his computer items including The Satanic Bible ebook, the jury heard.

Mr Aylett suggested a perforated metal sheet Brizzi bought from a DIY store had been used as a "grater" to strip flesh from the alleged victim's body.

Inside the oven was a pool of PC Semple's body fat and there was evidence of heat damage to one of his legs, the court heard.

Some body parts, including internal organs, muscle, fat and skin were not recovered, the court was told.

While in the custody suite after his

arrest, Brizzi allegedly said: "I thought I was getting away with it. I had nearly finished but I took a shot [of crystal meth]. I was going to finish the job today.

"As you can see, this man was a very big man and all I have left is two buckets."

As an officer typed up the custody record, the defendant added: "And another thing. Just one thing, my bathtub has been unusable for day. I would appreciate a shower."

A post-mortem examination revealed evidence of GHB and sedative ketamine in PC Semple's remains.

Jurors heard that PC Semple and Brizzi engaged in sexual conduct that involved the alleged victim having a leash put around his neck.

Mr Aylett said: "As the defendant did so, it is claimed that the leash slipped. It was then that the defendant realised that Mr Semple was no longer breathing.

"The defendant says that Mr Semple had no pulse, the defendant was unable to rouse him."

He added: "Whether it was done as part of some satanic ritual, or whether it occurred in the course of sexual activity – as the defendant now says – or whether any drugs that the defendant had taken had made him paranoid, the prosecution allege that the defendant deliberately strangled Gordon Semple.

"Having murdered him, he went on to dismember his body before attempting to dispose of it in circumstances that amount to cannibalism."

Brizzi denies murder but has admitted obstructing a coroner by dismembering and disposing of the body.

The case, which is expected to last three weeks, continues.

Week ending October 23, 2016 **11**

Is education equality impossible dream as selective appeal grows?

BBC Radio Kent hosted a lively debate on the many controversial issues around the grammar school system. We went along to hear the views of an informed and opinionated panel of education figures...

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

AUTHOR and journalist Peter Hitchens has slammed claims that scrapping Kent's selective system would bring all schools to the same standard.

Speaking at a debate staged by BBC Radio Kent in Canterbury this week on grammar education, the out-spoken Mail on Sunday columnist said a completely level playing field was not possible.

Mr Hitchens, who supports grammars being rolled out across the country, told the audience on Monday night at St Stephen's Junior School: "To say that all schools can be great is as fatuous as saying all students can be above average."

"Not all schools can be great, but if schools are going to be selective then they should select rationally and fairly based on ability, instead of basing it on wealth and religious faith."

Mr Hitchens was joined on the panel by Kent County Council leader Paul Carter; Jim Skinner, the chief executive of the Grammar School Heads' Association; Medway Labour group leader Vince Maple; headteacher of Ebbsfleet Academy Alison Colwell; and Joanne Bartley, head of the Whitstable-based Kent Education Network which wants an end to the selective system.

The selective system is once again under the spotlight after prime minister Theresa May signalled an end to a ban on grammar expansion, introduced by Tony Blair's Labour administration in 2008.

It means more can now be opened and the opportunity for some schools to be converted into selectives. Meopham School, near Gravesend, and part of the Swale Academies Trust, is believed to be the first in the country to seek to make the transition after starting a consultation process with parents last month.

However, opposition to such a move has intensified – spearheaded by Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn.

At the debate, chaired by presenter Julia George, all agreed the selection process was flawed.

Currently pupils in Year 6 sit either the Kent Test or Medway Test in September. If they secure a high score it gives them the chance to apply for a grammar berth the following month.

However, opponents say the peril of tarnishing those who fail to achieve the necessary results "a failure" is not fair.

Joanne Bartley, from the Kent Education Network, explained: "For those pupils not getting the required score, they feel less clever than their friends who did pass. But who's to say they won't develop later? My daughter failed the Kent Test and went on to get 10 A-grade GCSEs."



DEBATE: Julia George, left, hosted the panel discussion which included author and journalist Peter Hitchens



Labour group leader on Medway Council, Vince Maple, highlighted the concerns it places on a child's well-being.

He added: "School transitions are really difficult anyway. Having a test to go alongside this makes it even more difficult. The school system is letting children and their mental health down."

Jim Skinner, CEO of the Grammar School Heads' Association, and former principal of Beths Grammar School in Bexley, added he believed "there should be greater opportunities for teenagers to move to selec-

tives, from non-selectives, if they are doing well".

A point unlikely to gain support from non-selectives heads who already see the top 20 per cent of pupils at 11 sent to grammars and then face the challenge of hitting government targets for GCSE results without the brightest students.

The 11-Plus test – which includes verbal and non-verbal reasoning, as well as English and maths – is often accused of favouring the middle classes. With state schools in the county prevented from coaching their children in how to pass it, it is often seen

as the chance for better-off parents to pay for tutors to help their child gain an advantage.

Public schools do coach their youngsters, with many leaping from the private to state sector at 11 as a consequence.

Alison Colwell, from the non-selective Ebbsfleet Academy, said the 11-Plus failed children in a myriad of ways.

She said: "The Kent Test shows more about the child's upbringing, the support from their parents, the money their parents have to spend on tutors, and the problems they've had

at home than it does about a child's academic ability."

"At 10, being told you're a failure can stay with you all your life."

"The grammar school debate is just a distraction from making all schools great. The government should be focused on that and not the opening of new selective schools."

However, that sparked Mr Hitchens into life.

He added: "All good schools select on some basis or another even by segregating the children into ability once they've arrived at the school. The question is how you do this."

KCC leader Paul Carter, who has supported grammar education in the county and backed its expansion – having been active in the push for a selective in Sevenoaks – pointed to what happens in Germany as an alternative.

The Conservative councillor explained: "In Germany they still have grammar schools but everyone sits a universal test at the age of 12."

"Then parents and teachers together look at the outcome and decide the best kind of school to suit their child. If everyone is on a level playing field then this would wipe out the issue of the wealthy taking all of the places in selective schools."

Mr Hitchens added: "Germany brought back grammar schools because they are good for their country. Selective education is a producer of talent and provides the best education in the world."

It was not a view shared by Joanne Bartley. She said: "Many parents choose tutors and are paying £2,000 a year to have their child mentored. Lots of parents believe that if they don't pay for this their child won't pass."

The Kent Test was altered two years ago in a move many heralded as an attempt to make it 'tutor-proof'.

While KCC chiefs have always distanced themselves from that claim, the demand for extra tuition ahead of the test has shown no signs of slowing.

KCC's Paul Carter said: "Coaching for the Kent Test is neither needed or approved. And it has been made more ability orientated. Coaching does go on though, and schools have no control over that."

Added KCC cabinet minister for education, Roger Gough, who was in the audience at the debate: "When we changed the Kent Test a few years ago, it was to bring it closer to the curriculum. We never said it is tutor proof but it is more based on ability. It has to be a fair test, there is no control over tutoring but coaching by schools is not approved."

■ What do you think about the selective system? Share your views and join the debate. Email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or write to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP.



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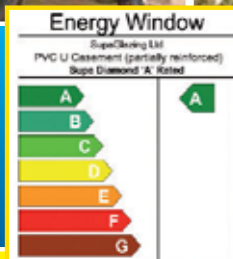
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For whom the bridge tolls as QEII Bridge hits anniversary

A quarter of a century ago, the Queen made the first symbolic journey across the £120m bridge that carried her name and provided a precious relief to mounting congestion at the tunnel. We take a look back at its often controversial history

By Tom Pyman

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NEXT weekend marks 25 years since the official opening of one of the county's grandest and most controversial structures.

Towering over the River Thames, the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge is an almost-daily source of frustration for commuters at the notorious Dartford Crossing.

Designed to ease congestion being felt at the tunnel, it was a feat of engineering which promised to ease traffic flows at one of the

south east's most notorious pinch points.

Opened almost 30 years after the original first tunnel, today it is already showing signs of struggling under a sheer weight of numbers.

It is perhaps a sign of things to come that within just a quarter of a century, traffic demands are now so high the government is mulling over the options for another crossing across the Thames in Kent to help take the strain.

Development at the crossing began in the 1930s, though it was interrupted by the Second World War, meaning a single tunnel, with traffic flowing in both directions, was not completed and open to traffic until 1963.

A second crossing – the east tunnel – was then constructed and opened in 1980, with one route taking traffic from Kent to Essex and vice-versa.

However, congestion continued to build over the years following the completion of the M25 motorway, and a third crossing in Dartford and Thurrock was proposed – this time to develop a bridge over the river.

Control of the crossing was transferred from Kent County Council and Essex County Council to a private company called Dartford River Crossing Limited and a private finance initiative (PFI) concession was made, with construction beginning immediately after that in 1988.

The bridge was designed by German civil engineer Hellmut Homberg, and the two main retaining structures, known as caissons, supporting the bridge piers were constructed in the Netherlands.

Each caisson has been designed to withstand the impact of a strike by a ship weighing up to 65,000 tonnes and travelling up to 11.5 mph.

The bridge deck is some 200ft high, and it took a team of around 56 to assemble its structure.

Its official opening on October 30, 1991, saw the Queen herself drive across the bridge which took her name. Such was the national buzz around the opening, even pop music station Radio 1 broadcast live on the day from the bridge.

In total it had cost £120million – around £250m in today's money – which included some £30m for the approach roads.

At one stage, work on an approach road had to be halted and the entire bridge cleared after an unexploded bomb dropped during



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ANNIVERSARY: After 25 years, the QEII Bridge is an essential part of the south east's roads infrastructure.

Pictures: Highways England

the Second World War was unearthed.

It was the longest cable-stayed span of any bridge in Europe at the time, and remains the only crossing downstream of central London to be opened since Tower Bridge in 1894.

Roy Hawkins, of the Dartford Historical and Antiquarian Society, recalls its development.

"The general feeling was there needed to be a crossing because the Blackwall Tunnel and existing Dartford tunnels were having problems," he told KoS.

"As soon as the work started people were quite pleased because it didn't overly disrupt the town itself.

"It's out on the marshes so it was a good place to put it but I think people were surprised at its height.

"What you were looking at on the other side of the river was an industrial area so people didn't complain about it too much from an aesthetic point of view - it was just like having an

American freeway brought into our system and it was a boon.

"It was not a straight forward job but it brought employment into the area because there were a lot of labouring jobs and they spent

Continued on page 16

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Continued from page 15

money on local accommodation so it did have its plus sides."

Those economic benefits were felt not just at the time but throughout the last 25 years, as industry in Kent became more accessible.

Jo James, of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, said: "The QEII Bridge has served an important national function completing the M25 and linking Kent to Essex.

"However, it is currently operating over capacity and causing serious environmental and economic challenges for Dartford due to the daily congestion and delays."

Dartford MP Gareth Johnson has lived and worked in the town and says he supported its construction a quarter of a century ago, but highlighted a lack of forward planning to ensure it was aided by other infrastructure.

"It was very much needed at the time," the Conservative told KoS.

"I was working in Essex and used to have to join the queues at the tunnel when I crossed over and for a while the bridge worked in reducing congestion.

"But it was the last time anything significant was done to tackle the problems and we're now playing catch-up because nothing was done for so many years to plan for future congestion – we should have been having these conversations 15 years ago.

"It was, and still remains, a beautiful piece of engineering, but the congestion has gradually built up on us and it's frustrating.

"We didn't have the foresight to realise the bridge was only a temporary measure."

Traffic problems at the bridge and tunnels have regularly made national headlines in recent years, with local businesses even admitting they have lost out on significant revenue due to consistent congestion.

In times of significant weather conditions, strong winds can force the bridge to close and that creates enormous pressure on traffic flows – forcing the tunnel to have just one bore for each direction.

The fragility of such a key part of transport infrastructure can then be exposed.

Indeed only back in February, commuters told us they experienced their "worst ever" delays at the crossing, as Storm Imogen battered the bridge, leaving some motorists queuing for more than 10 hours.

It reignited the calls for a third crossing – either at Dartford or, as appear more likely, close to neighbouring Gravesend – to span the bridge and allow traffic an alternative route into Essex.

Two years ago the government attempted to ease woes by removing the toll booths and introducing an online payment system, Dart Charge, to help traffic flow more freely.

However, in addition to struggles in collecting payments, many users of the crossing say the congestion is in fact even worse than when the booths were in place as the volume of traffic appears to continually grow.

Mr Hawkins, of the Dartford Historical and Antiquarian Society, added: "The congestion is actually worse now than it was with the toll booths, so how do we reconcile that?

"You would have thought there would be some kind of trial scheme.

"When there's an accident they

HOW ROUTE TO FREE TRAVEL GOT DIVERTED

ASK any driver with a long memory about the QEII Bridge, and they will point out how the original deal was for the toll to stay in place until the monies to cover the cost of the ambitious project were raised – and then it would be free.

And that meant that by April 2003, tolls would have generated enough to finally bid farewell to the tolls.

To the surprise of few, however,

the charge remained.

The then-Highways Agency decided the bridge was covered under the Transport Act 2000 which allowed it to introduce charging on key roads, bridges or tunnels.

Thus, technically, the tolls switched to being a simple charge.

Today the toll booths are gone

and the remote charging system in place – forcing drivers to either set up pre-pay accounts or pay within a fixed time limit each and every time they use the crossing, either by phone or online.

Today, cars pay £2.50 for each journey. When the crossing first opened it was two shilling and sixpence – the equivalent, believe it or not, today of charging £2.



and there doesn't seem to be this feeling that the roads should be as open as possible.

"There used to be police traffic patrols to keep things moving to the best of their ability, but now we have nothing on the roads to assist traffic."

The solution, the government claims, is another river crossing east of Gravesend, which would see the building of a road from the start of the M2, heading through the Gravesham countryside, passing villages such as Shorne, before a bored tunnel would cross into Tilbury and join the M25.

Yet the opposition in affected areas has been as vociferous as Dartford has been supportive, and campaigning against Highways England's plans continues.

Ms James added: "A new Lower Thames Crossing is an economic necessity for the communities on both sides of the Thames.

"It is vital that a decision is made quickly and that the investment is ring-fenced in the chancellor's autumn statement, which is due

at the end of November.

"A new crossing of the Thames will provide resilience for this strategically important trade route and will support the investment being made at the Port of Dover and the Channel Tunnel."

"We have seen some improvements in the Dart Charge collection system," Mr Johnson admitted.

"There were numerous occasions where people were being wrongly charged and many of them came to me and we assist them as best we can.

"The councils, the developers, the haulage industry, everyone knows we need another crossing, but that's years away.

"We need Highways England to come up with innovative ideas and a radical solution.

"It only takes a small incident to cause absolute gridlock and there are a range of issues that are wrong, from signage to road layout."

A final decision on the crossing east of Gravesend is expected by the end of the year, with the tunnels set to open by 2025 if all goes to plan.

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SUCCESS: Winners show off their awards, above, and host Andy Garland, from BBC Radio Kent, below.

All pictures courtesy of Manu Palomeque/Kent Life

Raising a glass to county's finest

A glitzy bash took place this week for the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards; our annual celebration of the county's very best producers and products. Find out who was crowned here

By Adele Couchman

adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

HUNDREDS turned out at a glitzy event at Ashford International Hotel on Monday evening for the Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards.

Now in its fourth year, the awards showcase the best the region's food and drink industry has to offer, including local producers and suppliers, small farming businesses, chefs, restaurants, pubs and hoteliers – which are all nominated by readers.

Having narrowed down a shortlist for the categories celebrating the greatest in food and drink producers and providers around the county, the winners were selected by a panel of high-profile individual judges, who all live and work in Kent.

The winners were announced, following a three-course meal, by BBC Radio Kent presenter Andy Garland at the black-tie event in front of a packed audience.

Among them were Julian Barnes of Biddenden Vineyards. He scooped Kent Food and Drink Hero of the Year – the top award of the evening designed to celebrate an individual who promotes the Kent food and drink scene, contributes to the community and enthuses people with their



passion for local produce.

"It was very humbling to be pulled out of a room full of people for recognition of what myself and my team do," said Mr Barnes, whose family-run business produces around 80,000 bottles of wine, half a million bottles of apple juice and 350,000 litres of cider every year.

"We're all about championing Kent's produce and showing where it derives from so people can see how their food and drink comes together."

Read's in Faversham won the prestigious Restaurant of the Year, with judges looking out for interesting and innovative menus featuring local produce, helpful and knowledgeable staff and also great value for money.

Set in a Georgian manor house, owner and Michelin-starred head chef David Pitchford co-owns Read's with his wife Rona. Mr Pitchford said: "We have run

Read's for close to 40 years, and we feel elated to have won this award.

"People think we have been doing this for years, but an award like this is just important to us now as it was years and years ago."

Food Producer of the Year went to Kent Collection Smokehouse & Charcuterie in Cranbrook, with Graham Garrett of the West House Restaurant in Biddenden winning Chef of the Year – who was chosen for producing high quality food and local dishes.

The Tyler's Kiln in Tyler's Hill, Canterbury, won the Pub of the Year category – which required contenders to stock a wide range of real ales supporting local breweries. Formerly called the Ivy House, the pub recently underwent a £1 million facelift for its opening in January 2015 – a time when many pubs were closing.

Co-owner Allister Collins said: "We were ecstatic and delighted to win this award seeing as we only opened last year and every-one works so hard here."

"The pub took two and a half years in the making and we take pride in our attention to detail."

"It's the first time we have been recognised for such a big award and we've seen more people coming through the doors this week as a result of it."

The Customer Service of the

Year award went to Hendricks of Hythe, a chocolaterie specialising in hand-rolled and moulded truffle chocolates.

Owner Tamsin Cullen said the secret to her success was creating a "home from home" environment for people coming to the shop:

"I couldn't believe we had won the award. We were nominated by our customers without us knowing, so it was a lovely surprise."

"There is a lovely buzz here and no purchase is too small. People tell me they feel as if they are coming into a family environment and we will always listen to them and have a chat."

"We have lots of people who come here on their own and they always get talking to other customers, so there is a real community vibe."

Tony Little, commercial director of Archant – parent company of both Kent on Sunday and Kent Life – said: "Kent has a wonderful reputation for producing fantastic food and drink; it's therefore fitting we get to meet and recognise many of the people who contribute so much to bringing this reputation to life."

"We'd like to thank all those who entered for taking part, to our judges for making the tough decisions and to our sponsors for making it all happen."

THE FULL LIST OF WINNERS

Newcomer of the Year:
Sulston's Kitchen, Tonbridge

Drink Producer of the Year:
Anno Distillers, Marden

Farmers' Market of the Year:
West Malling Farmers' Market

Farm Shop of the Year:

Lower Hardres Farm Shop, Canterbury

Independent Food and Drink Retailer of the Year:
Macknade Fine Foods, Faversham

Cafe of the Year:
Finch House Cafe & Bakery, Tonbridge

Customer Service of the Year:
Hendricks of Hythe

Restaurant of the Year:
Read's Restaurant with Rooms, Faversham

Chef of the Year:
Graham Garrett, of The West House Restaurant, Biddenden

Food Producer of the Year:
Kent Collection Smokehouse & Charcuterie, Cranbrook

Pub of the Year:
The Tyler's Kiln, Canterbury

Kent Food and Drink Hero of the Year:
Julian Barnes, of Biddenden Vineyards

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Don't ignore danger of deers on our roads

Rutting season is here and that means the animals are more likely to stray onto our roads and cause accidents...

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MOTORISTS have been warned to take extra care on the roads as deers enter mating season - and that means more straying on to our roads and potentially causing accidents.

Between October and December is the autumn mating season known as the rut. And it means the large animals who normally stay hidden in woodland, will be moving location more than usual.

Which means more than ever are

likely to be strolling on to our roads unaware of the danger they pose to both themselves and startled motorists.

Highways England says deer cause around 74,000 incidents each year across the UK - with 20 people being killed as a result and 700 hurt.

For the deer, being struck can cause instant death or a lingering one if they then limp off badly injured. Exact figures for the numbers hurt or killed are not known as there is no legal necessity to report them.

So now the agency is advising motorists to take extra care - especially in places like Ashdown Forest, near

Tunbridge Wells, and Challock, near Ashford, where deer are known to stray onto roads which cut through dense woodland.

In Kent, there were some 70 incidents reported last year with the lowest in recent years 54 in 2012 and the highest 88 in 2014.

The Deer Initiative is a partnership of statutory, voluntary and private interests dedicated to "ensuring the delivery of a sustainable, well-managed wild deer population in England and Wales".

A spokesman explained: "Bear in mind these are the reported figures.

"We have on average about 4,000 records for each of these years, and an estimated 40,000 deer vehicle collisions per year across England. This could be extrapolated to suggest that numbers of DVCs (deer vehicle collisions) in Kent are more likely in the region of 600-800 per year."

The collisions are said to cost the country some £50 million plus in injuries and car damage.

According to the last deer vehicle collision report, between 2003 and 2010, there were 440 incidents in the



county. And between 1999 and 2010, there have been 25 personal injury accidents involving deer.

Drivers are urged to slow down in danger areas especially between sunset and midnight and again around sunrise.

Jamie Cordery, from the Kent office of the Deer Initiative, explained control of deer populations was key to the issue: "Keeping numbers down is vital to reduce damage to crops and of course minimise accidents on the road.

"Culling has been around ever

since humans and deer started mixing."

Geoff Parsons, at Kent and Sussex Deer Control, says keeping populations down is vital for the countryside.

He told us: "Kent is not as bad as some places. You get a lot of deer around Lamberhurst and some in Ashford.

"You do get muntjac deer around Sevenoaks, but they are not too much of a problem as they are quite small; about the size of a dog.

"Frant, which is right on the Kent

HOW TO REPORT DEER STRIKES

TO help understand where deer strike incidents are most likely to occur, motorists can help by reporting them at the Deer Aware website at deeraware.com.

There, drivers can find some more advice on how to avoid a collision and on how to collect vi-

tal data in the event of an accident.

The organisation said: "Our research is the only national effort to collect data that could be used to save lives - the information you submit is an essential part of this important effort."

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CAUTION: Motorists should heed advice about to reduce the chance of accidents on our roads due to deers

and East Sussex border, also sees a lot of deer accidents, and of course Ashdown Forest where there is always a problem.

"They are prolific breeders which means the populations in Kent are growing. Fallow herds can increase 30 to 40 per cent per annum. Farmers have problems with them eating crops and what they don't eat, they flatten by laying down in large num-



SWIFT: Deer populations can grow fast as is seen across the county

bers. Left to their own devices, the increase will start affecting the food chain.

"We had one chap ring us the other day saying deer had decimated all the fruit trees in his garden. He lost the lot.

"Another farm last year we had to hit quite hard because things were getting out of control."

He said they can also spread Lyme disease, lung worm and liver fluke, and the more their populations are squeezed together by urban sprawl, the worse this will get.

Mr Parsons added: "We keep their numbers down to a controllable level. We have nothing against the deer, but we do important and vital work. There is need for our work."

Robin Shilling, with the same organisation, said: "We need to keep the numbers under some sort of control and to do that perhaps we need land owners to take on more responsibility of deer on their land.

"It is a serious problem. My secretary's son was killed by a deer collision some time back."

But Dr Sue Young is head of conservation, policy and evidence at the Kent Wildlife Trust.

She told us: "The majority of deer in Kent are on the south west border.

"So far this year, we have not had any reports of seeing dead deer at the side of the road.

"Drivers need to be aware of the possibility of deer and be aware of

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND: ADVICE TO DRIVERS

WHEN you see deer warning signs or are travelling through a heavily wooded or forested stretch of road, check your speed and stay alert.

■ If your headlights are on, use full-beams when you can; but dip them if you see deer, as they may 'freeze'.

■ More deer may follow the

first one you see.

■ Be prepared to stop. Try not to suddenly swerve to avoid a deer. Hitting oncoming traffic or another obstacle could be even worse.

■ If you have to stop, use your hazard warning lights.

■ Do not approach an injured deer – it could be dangerous.

them as an additional hazard.

"A cull is not needed in Kent and the number of deer in Kent is not something that has come up.

"We would encourage people to report wildlife sightings to the Kent Biological Records Centre. The more records we have of where things are, the better we can understand conservation needs in the county."

Steve Alton, the conservation officer at Ashdown Forest near Tunbridge Wells, said: "It is such a serious problem around here that we have now taken on a specialist deer officer.

"He has been in the job for only a month and the first thing to do is actually find out how big our population of deer is, because we can currently only guess at around 2,500 female fallow deer. And where they move to and from would be useful too.

"We have around 200-and-something collisions a year. There are speed limits but drivers don't keep to them. Speed camera sites are chosen where there are more people than deer so they don't really help, although we have raised the idea of them.

"What I would like to see is a fence, at least six foot high, around the fastest part of the A22 just to try and limit opportunities for them to stray onto the roads where drivers cannot react in time.

"We did start a small-scale deer cull two years ago which is ongoing. But we are making progress in the right direction."

Tony Sangwine is senior principal environmental adviser at Highways England.

He said: "Our top priority is safety, which is why we are working with the Deer Initiative to warn motorists about these particular risks. Deer are highly active at this time of the year, meaning they can suddenly appear on the road, at both dawn and dusk.

"With most deer movement coinciding with key commuting hours, we are urging drivers to be more aware so that they can complete their journeys on our roads safely and without incident."

Some 1.5million deer live wild in the UK. There are six main species, roe, red, skia, Chinese water, muntjac and fallow.

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Fresh blood fury over May snub

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A VICTIM of the contaminated blood scandal has slammed the prime minister after she ruled out a much longed for public inquiry.

In an exchange of correspondence between Theresa May and Labour MP Diana Johnson, who had called for an inquiry during prime minister's questions in the House of Commons last month, the PM appeared to dismiss her previous hint she was considering a major independent probe into the issues.

The blood contamination scandal saw the majority of infections occur during the 1970s and '80s when blood products – primarily used to treat haemophiliacs – were sourced from a variety of places.

Among them was blood coming out of the US where companies, desperate to meet increasing demand, used donors which included drug addicts and prisoners.

Haemophiliacs suffer from a condition where their blood does not clot as it should. That means when they bleed, often it cannot be stopped without treatment.

Many received, often as children, a blood product called Factor VIII. This they took as a temporary measure to allow their blood to clot and was pre-

scribed by the NHS. But it was often infected with blood that carried the likes of hepatitis C and HIV.

It is estimated some 4,800 haemophiliacs were infected with hepatitis C, which causes damage to the liver often resulting in cancer, while 1,200 of those were also infected with HIV – the virus that leads to AIDS.

Among those infected were a number from Kent.

It is estimated some 2,000 have died as a consequence.

Former PM David Cameron gave the first apology from the British government for the scandal and announced a review of the compensation package available. But many victims say the results of that remain inadequate – pointing to lives, careers and families ruined and only a sizeable lump sum payment being sufficient.

Pressure is now being applied for a Hillsborough-style independent panel to uncover the truth behind what happened and why contaminated blood was able to be used in such products to such a vulnerable group.

Having said she would look into the possibility of such an inquiry at PMQs, a letter from the PM to blood campaigner Diana Johnson revealed “the government does not believe another inquiry would be in the best interests of sufferers and their families”.

She apologised to those affected



REJECTED: Theresa May has appeared to have ignored pleas for a public inquiry into contamination scandal

but said “it is unlikely a public inquiry would provide further information”, following previous independent inquiries conducted by Lord Archer and Lord Penrose.

It enraged Broadstairs' Steve Dymond. The 60-year-old was infected with hepatitis C when he took Factor VIII as a child.

He said: “Her refusal in her letter of 30 September makes her personal apology to those affected ring both hollow and false.

“By deliberately misconstruing this request for an independent panel, claiming that no new information would be forthcoming, is as disingenuous as it is alarming.

“Only two weeks ago, as reported in KoS, Lord Owen revealed the wilful destruction of his private and ministerial papers whilst minister of health and the refusal of Department of Health officials to assist the Archer inquiry is common knowledge.

“What can there be to hide? In in-

sisting so inelegantly and heavy handedly the government is not to blame or at fault for what has been called ‘the worst treatment disaster in the history of the NHS’ can only lead to suspicion.

“This latest refusal to be open and allow the truth about the history of contaminated blood to be revealed fully and frankly, demonstrates yet again the disdain and contempt Whitehall reserves for the sufferers and victims of contaminated blood.”

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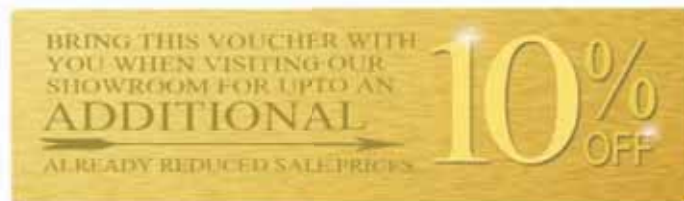
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Buildings join the 'at risk' register

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A NUMBER of buildings in the county have been added to this year's Heritage At Risk Register. However, the good news is that while there are 28 sites added to the list, compiled by Historic England, across the south east, some 53 have been removed.

The At Risk Register provides an annual snapshot of the condition of some of the south east's most important historic buildings, sites, monuments and places.

Among those added this year is Mersham Court Barn, in Mersham, near Ashford.

Historic England says the Grade II* listed building is a large, fine and rare timber-framed threshing barn dating probably from the 15th century.

It said: "It has been added to the 'at risk' register this year because the barn has for some time been suffering from water damage caused by a leaking roof and structural movement after falling out of agricultural use.

"The barn's roof tiles have recently been removed and although the roof has been temporarily protected with plastic sheeting, this covering is not comprehensive and will not last indefinitely. Solutions are being sought which will allow the barn to be restored and a new use found for it which is compatible with its special architectural qualities."

Also added to the list were three conservation areas in Swale; Milton Regis, Newington High Street, and Upchurch.

Additional listed buildings included are St Martin's Church, Ryarsh; Church of St Mary, Frittenden; Church of St Michael, Offham, Church of St Mary Magdalene, Cobham; and St Nicholas in Pluckley.

However, those coming off the list include the Grade II* listed Sheerness Dockyard Houses, and St Dunstan's Church in the High Street at Cranbrook.

Historic England said: "This is a tale of a remarkable change of fortunes for the former officers' houses at Sheerness historic dockyard.

"Built in the 1820s to designs by the architect to the Navy, George Ledwell Taylor, these houses demonstrate the high quality of construction and decoration that the Navy was capable of in the period and the luxury accommodation afforded to its officers.

"These houses within the dockyard's secure perimeter wall were converted to offices and subsequently fell out of use after the Navy left Sheerness in 1960. They were considered to be 'at risk' because their condition was deteriorating and possibilities for their re-use were rapidly diminishing. However, a consortium of private owners co-ordinated by the Spitalfields Trust purchased the site in 2011.

"They were removed because the

ADDED: Mersham Court Barn has been added by Historic England. Inset, Sheerness Dockyard Houses repaired and now removed from the at risk list



new owners of these now private houses have just completed an extensive restoration project carried out to the highest standards. A further phase of works to the nearby burnt-out Dockyard Church is now being planned."

The other step forward featured St Dunstan's in Cranbrook.

Historic England said: "It is a large medieval parish church at the centre of Cranbrook. It was 'at risk' because of problems with the large west tower. It is constructed of the local Wealden Sandstone, which, despite withstanding the weather for several hundred years, has been decaying in long horizontal bands.

"This has been worse on the south and west sides of the church which is the direction of the prevailing winds. St Dunstan's Church has now been removed from the 'at risk' register following major repairs to the south and west elevations and the north and east elevations, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund."

Other removals from the register include ring ditch monuments in Thanet, several churches in Larkfield, Ramsgate and Cranbrook, plus the Dalby Square conservation area in Cliftonville.

Overall in the south east, 86 Grade I and II* buildings, 217 scheduled monuments, 104 places of worship,

24 registered parks and gardens, one battlefield, four protected wrecks and 70 conservation areas are at risk of neglect, decay or inappropriate change.

Clare Charlesworth, the principal advisor for the register, said: "From coastal defence batteries to landscape parks, there are many challenges when sites become at risk.

"Historic England continues to invest grant aid and to dedicate time and expertise working with owners, developers and communities to find solutions to rescue precious sites in the South East so people can continue to enjoy them and the stories they tell about our past."

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Energy park keeps foot on power

A former colliery in east Kent is set to be transformed as part of multi-million pound project. We took a visit to watch the topping out ceremony for the green energy visitor centre at the Betteshanger site...

By Adele Couchman

adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

PLANS for a £40 million sustainable park near Deal have reached a new milestone with a green energy visitor centre due to open next spring.

Built on the site of the former Betteshanger colliery which closed in 1989, the new £8 million visitor complex will include a Green Energy Centre and the Kent Mining Museum to preserve the history and heritage of the county's mining communities.

The project is the first phase of the Betteshanger Sustainable Parks scheme, which was conceived by the Hadlow Group as part of the regeneration of the former colliery. The 121-hectare site, which was one of the largest brownfield sites in Kent, will see the once derelict coal mining field turned into a centre for green technology business.

The second phase of the development will include Betteshanger Business Park – a low carbon and sustainable business and education park for companies in food security, environmental technology and green technologies. Supporters say the site could be open as early as September 2018, with the entire sustainable parks scheme set to create more than 1,000 jobs and generate £6.2 million annually for the local economy.

Backed by the Hadlow Group, funds for the project already include £11m of public sector investment – with plans to secure another £10m of public money.

Mark Lumsden-Taylor, deputy group principal and deputy CEO at the Hadlow Group, said the project is integral to the economic regeneration of east Kent.

He explained: "We are a county college and we initially didn't have a significant presence in the east of the county.

"But after we got rated outstanding by Ofsted in 2010, we set ourselves the objectives of expanding our overall portfolio of business."

The college has its traditional base near Tonbridge but has recently expanded.

Mr Lumsden-Taylor added: "We felt responsible and duty bound to make a difference in this park. By doing what we've done, we've given east Kent a proper regeneration project. It needs jobs, it needs investment and it needs economics.

"We're an organisation that isn't just about education but about economic and social change."

Betteshanger Sustainable Park director Richard Morsley added: "We're creating a new visitor centre housing the Kent Mining Museum, Green Energy Centre and fantastic new sporting facilities.

"But it's also more than that – it's a social and economic regeneration project that's going to generate a significant amount back into the local economy."

No strangers to a rescue project,



PLANS: Top and bottom pix - how the park will look when fully complete. Centre, VIPs at the topping out ceremony to celebrate its progress to date



the Hadlow Group took over the running of K College sites in Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Ashford in 2014 after the troubled college was split up having amassed debts of £16m.

"Over the past 15 years, we have transformed people's lives. Trying to work out how many students lives we've changed is well over 100,000," explains Mark Lumsden-Taylor

Education provision will also be expanded at Betteshanger at the business incubation unit and educational centre due for completion in 2018, which will provide education in rural and alternative technologies for 500 students.

Mr Lumsden Taylor told KOS: "We will deliver vocational business fo-

cused education and supporting young people to get into industry.

"Our aim is not only to train them, but to also support and place them into business, because otherwise, why are you training them? They will just become NEETs (not in education, employment or training) otherwise, joining the masses of people with lots of qualifications who aren't progressing."

Although the Betteshanger Sustainable Parks development will celebrate green technology – which will be capable of meeting its own energy needs and have one of the lowest Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings in the UK and Europe – the scheme also promises to commemo-

rate the old energy once generated on the coalfield.

As it stands, east Kent is the only coalfield without its own regional museum – something that will be changed with the new mining museum, which will display the artefacts and memories of the county's mining communities.

Adds Richard Morsley: "Betteshanger is a unique project, recognising the site's important heritage alongside a more sustainable future. Energy is at the heart of the Betteshanger project, offering energy old through the creation of the Kent Mining Museum and energy new with the creation for the state-of-the-art visitor centre.

"It's absolutely imperative we preserve the memories of the mining communities here. It's a heritage at risk which young people do not know about and the mining communities are getting older.

"The Kent Mining Museum will tell the story of these communities, which are still thriving today with character and traditions which are still very much alive.

"But many people have never had the chance to be engaged in this story, and the Kent Mining Museum is a wonderful way to tell them.

"It's a regeneration project, bringing this former colliery site back into economic use which has stood large and derelict since the mine closed in 1989."

Jim Davies, a former Betteshanger miner, was at the topping out ceremony of the new visitor centre which allowed a behind the scenes glimpse of the new building.

He said: "The closure of the colliery was a huge blow to miners, their families and local people.

"It's wonderful to see the new visitor centre rise from the ashes. The mining museum will incorporate the whole Kent coalfield, providing an invaluable legacy. People will be able to learn more about what it was like for us and our memories will be preserved for future generations."

The site is surrounded by Betteshanger Country Park, an 80-hectare outdoor activity park which already attracts 80,000 visitors a year.



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Settler's golden touch preserved

By Mike Gunnill

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

WHEN Harriet Bowbye left the family home with her husband Robert for a new life in New Zealand, she can have had little inkling of the life that would lay before her.

At a little over 20, she and her partner lived in Lower Street, Deal, but yearned for a fresh start.

Within the space of a few years her husband would be dead and she become caught up in a gold rush which would deliver such riches she could buy a hotel which continues to stand today.

They couple bid farewell to England on December 10, 1858, bound for Lyttelton in New Zealand – a port town

on the eastern coast of the county's south island. It was also where a Church of England colony had been established some 10 years before and was keen to attract settlers.

They were joined on the voyage by another five families and all arrived at their new homeland.

But just two years later tragedy struck. Robert Bowbye drowned in Timaru in 1860 – a town a little further up the same coast.

Within a year, his widow had remarried. She had met Australian Henry Heron and the pair ran a butchers before the gold rush saw them sell the business and invest all into working at a gold mining site.

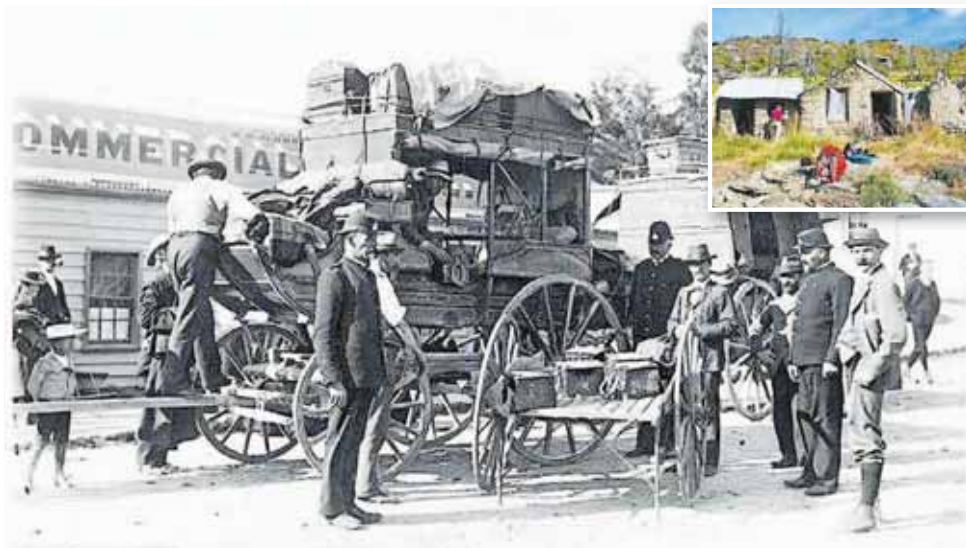
For three years they lived in a tent in pursuit of riches before they built a stone cottage. It still stands today, alongside the banks of Lake Roxburgh and still referred to as Mrs Heron's Cottage.

The stone cottage has recently been protected after the New Zealand government confirmed it was to be preserved under a plan to maintain its historic buildings.

Robin Miller, is a chartered surveyor or from Queensland-based Jackie Gillies & Associates, a company that specialises in historic conservation.

Originally also from Kent – he grew up in Tunbridge Wells and lived in Deal – explained the cottage's importance.

He said: "It came at a time when the country was developing and mi-



HISTORIC: The Commercial Hotel above, Harriet Heron, left, and Mrs Heron's Cottage, inset



grants like those from Deal helped the country. Harriet was well thought of in the camp and was at one time, the only woman among 1,200 men all looking for gold.

"The cottage in Gabriels Gully, now called Lawrence Gully will be returned to its original state and open for tourists to visit as part of a cycle trail through the area."

Mrs Heron's story didn't end there

though. In 1875, she and her husband moved to Roxburgh where they used the money from their mining exploits to buy the Commercial Hotel.

They worked alongside one another for nearly 20 years, before Henry died in 1896. Harriet continued to run the hotel alone until 1913.

Today, it is a popular destination for backpackers and there remains a

large photograph of Harriet by the hotel's front desk.

Today it is run by Pat and John Kerr.

Mr Kerr explained: "She was an important person in the development of Roxburgh. She always had time to listen to folk and was well thought of then and today as a town pioneer."

Harriet Heron died, aged 96, in 1933.

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COMEBACK KING? An icon of the '80s, singer Rick Astley is now back with a hit album and tour that includes a date at Bedgebury Pinetum in 2017

Pop singer Rick Astley to play Forest Live gig at Bedgebury

Having emerged into the spotlight 30 years ago he's now back with hit album...

AS the first male solo artist in the UK to have all of his initial eight singles reach top 10 status, Rick Astley was always going to be a firm favourite with the nation's music fans.

Mr Astley has recently announced that he is the first artist to confirm dates for Forest Live gigs in 2017, bringing him to a woodland location in Kent.

The singer's debut song, Never Gonna Give You Up, was the biggest selling hit of 1987 and was number one in 16 different countries.

Following on from his initial success, Mr Astley went on to sell 40 million records, and in 2002 his greatest hits compilation went gold.

But his career doesn't stop there. On June 10 this year, he released his first album in a decade which he's titled 50.

Every track on the new album has been written, performed and produced by the man himself.

The pop icon has a lot to celebrate with his recent album going straight to number one in the chart – the first time he's had a number one album in 29 years.

Mr Astley has pulled off one of the music industry's most spectacular comebacks.

50 has, like his greatest hits album, also gone gold and has been well received by fans and critics alike, with singles such as Keep Singing, and Angels On My Side raking in nearly 1.8m views on VEVO and more than 600,000 streams on Spotify.

Following on from a run of sold out indoor spring 2017 dates, at the Forest Live gigs fans can look forward to seeing Mr Astley perform a set of songs from his latest album as

well as some of his greatest hits.

Having played festivals such as V Festival and Rewind for years, this is no new experience for Mr Astley.

Forest Live is a series of concerts promoted by the Forestry Commission where acts perform in forest locations around the country.

It is an independent programme aimed at bringing forests to new audiences and income generated from ticket sales is spent on protecting, improving and expanding England's forests and woodlands and increasing their value to people and wildlife.

The rural concerts were launched in 2001, and since then 1.5m music fans have attended and seen performers such as Tom Jones and the Kaiser Chiefs.

Over Forest Live's 16-year history, money raised has contributed to

a wide range of projects, from wildlife conservation to making improvements for visitors.

With everything required for a great night out, including full catering and bar facilities, the gigs have a relaxed atmosphere.

Commenting on the concerts, Mr Astley said: "Next year 2017 sees me celebrating 30 years in the music business since my first number one hit. I can't wait to perform as part of Forest Live and I really hope you can make one of the dates to enjoy the experience with me."

Mr Astley will be performing as part of Forest Live at Bedgebury Pinetum near Tunbridge Wells on June 16, 2017.

Tickets went on sale October 21 (Friday) and can be purchased from the Forestry Commission box office by calling 03000 680400 or visiting www.forestry.gov.uk/music.

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ANGELA, 48yrs, seeks male companion for nights out, dining, maybe more. ACA or text me. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424495

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

HELEN, mid 50s naughty lady seeks some fun times with gent any age. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424493

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. Tel: 0906 515 3042 Box 422363

JACKIE, 56yrs, attractive lady who is lots of fun seeks like-minded gent for nights in, days out and much much more. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424491

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

PRESENTABLE divorced lady, young 60, many interests, animal lover, smart looking, cheerful, honest, smart looking man, for cultural times. Text only Mailbox: 5576629

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375

WENDY, 44yrs, dark haired beauty with blue eyes and a fab figure. WLTm gent any age, give me a call and I promise to call you back, or text/email. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424339

HI Gents, I'm Kelly, a down to earth lady. 35yrs, shapely brunette, seeking someone with GSOH, looks unimportant, any age. ACA, I promise! Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box 423035

MELANIE, 49yrs, varied interests, attractive, sensual lady seeks gent any age or status, call, see what happens. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424337

TARA, 35yrs, own business, well educated dark haired curly lady. Independent with no ties seeks "normal" chap for mutual pleasure. Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 424385

CALLING all Gentlemen! I'm Janet a mature solvent stylish lady. I'm waiting for you to call me so we can wine/dine and have some good times ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424335

NAUGHTY curvy 46yr old lady, outgoing and bubbly with a naughty side and lots of banter, WLTm chap 30+. If you are married even better. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3014 Box 424543

HI I'm Angie, attractive petite mid 50s lady. I'm a very very active lady, with lots of interests. WLTm chap with GSOH, looks/age unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424333

CORRINE, genuine advertiser seeking adult fun, no time wasters pls. I will respond to all msgs. Text Only. Mailbox: 4035196

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTm a reliable, sincere man for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 544344

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HELLO Gents, I'm a mature attractive interesting lady, with gorgeous eyes. I'm smart, sophisticated, love theatre and films. Give me a call or text me. Looks unimportant, must be kind. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424331

PHILIPPA, feminine open minded lady seeking adult fun, genuine responses only pls, no time-wasters. Text Only. Mailbox: 403610

WIDOW, 62, short, looking for friendship at present, interested? I have got to phone to find out more! Call Jan. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424195

OCTAVIA, black seductress, 53yrs, waiting to meet you. Pls text me today. Text Only. Mailbox: 4090520

RETIRED lady, an outgoing person, enjoys life, likes meals out, holidays, WLTm someone to share interests with, and quality time. Text only Mailbox: 5552642

LESLEY, 66, retired beauty therapist, blonde hair, blue eyes, size 14, likes going out, travelling, holidays, arts, looking for a nice guy, 57-67, would be great to get a reply. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424147

SINGLE lady, 65, blonde, quiet nature, likes the outdoors, picnics, jiving, WLTm single gentleman for companionship and possible romance. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 423411

GENUINE lady, 67, slim, GSOH, caring, honest, active, likes some things in life, days out, countryside, animals, long walks, visiting interesting places, cooking and holidays. WLTm a caring, honest male with GSOH, 67-73, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 423289

PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422393

KIM, 50, lovely kind, 5ft 6, brown eyes, dark curly hair, curvy figure seeks nice genuine guy for LTR, same age as me. Text only Mailbox: 5512493

RITA, seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, she's very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422403

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422339

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BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422411

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTm similar male for relationship. Text only Mailbox: 543851

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTm similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 421427

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. Text only Mailbox: 5320299

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. Text only Mailbox: 5456242

HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422905

WRITER, tall, slim, fit, natural dark hair, generous, seeks lady for erotic rendezvous, I will make it worth your while! Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422777

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 390929

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 418899

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 380789

PHILLIP, 66, into farming and country life, looking for a loyal, genuine lady, someone I can trust, to go on holidays with and spend time together. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422699

TONY, early 60s, 6ft, slim, fit, easy going, looking for no strings fun with a lady, age unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422643

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422587

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTm 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5441709

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 383719

TONY black male, 58, 5ft6, med build, n/s, seeking a local mature fun loving female 40/75 in the Chatham/Gillingham area for discreet fun. Text only Mailbox: 5459052

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wine, dining and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 361787

TALL single early 60's male looking for pure hearted lady for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5456781

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 387175

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 377397

MALE, widower, n/s, would love to meet buxom friendly lady, up to 70, for friendship at first, interests include all types of music, walking, quizzes. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422957

HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422905

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LOCAL Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 417127

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 418077

MALE, 54, shyish, looking for fun times with a lady, 60-70, with GSOH, status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422431

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 404013

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-35 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 250195

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTm similar lady to share interests, can travel. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 422375

BI male 68 slim looking for similar male who can accommodate. Text only Mailbox: 5585368

WOULD Mick from Maidenhed get in touch with John from Northampton - lost your number. Text only Mailbox: 4172093

HI I'm Andrew, 59, slim longish hair WLTm men aged 55-80 for daytime fun, Bi-curious, Sittingbourne Text only Mailbox: 5469911

JAMES, 34, seeks dominant, slim, Canterbury/Thanet male, 30-40, likes reading, music, walking, films, eating out, nights in, looking for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 4375 Box No: 424485

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Next year's Folkestone Triennial confirms dates for September

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

ARTS extravaganza the Folkestone Triennial 2017 has confirmed its dates for next year – one of the highlights on the Kent cultural calendar.

Organised by the town's Creative Foundation, the hugely popular event – which in 2017 saw 135,000 attend and commissioned works by the likes of Yoko Ono, Tracey Emin and Cornelia Parker – will take place over nine weeks from September 2 to November 5.

It will be curated by Lewis Biggs and take the title 'double edge'.

Last time out one artistic endeavour saw 30 bars of gold bullion worth a total of £10,000 buried in sand inside the harbour.

Folkestone Digs, by the German artist Michael Sailstorfer, saw the town beamed into the homes of millions of people around the world.

And street artist Banksy also made a secret appearance, leaving one of his graffiti works on a wall in the town.

For the 2017 event, internationally recognised artists will be com-



PERMANENT: Some artworks will become a part of the Folkestone Artworks collection

missioned to make new contemporary artworks exhibited in public spaces around the town.

Artists will be invited to engage with Folkestone's various narratives and material memories drawn from the town's social, cultural, political and economic history. Some artworks will become permanent additions expanding the town's permanent collection, Folkestone Artworks, built up

since the first edition of the triennial in 2008.

Curator Lewis Biggs said: "The title double edge has two meanings – the first is one of anxiety; the edge of the world, the edge of the future and the unknown. The secondary meaning is one of balance, released through the artist's imagination when one tips over the edge and looks back on the known with a renewed perspective. Great art makes

change and the ambition of this exhibition is to give artists the opportunity to make excellent new work that plays with ambiguity and the several meanings of edge, stimulating audiences to consider why the world is the way it is, how it might be, and how it is possible to change it."

Further details, including information about the artists commissioned for Folkestone Triennial, will be announced in March 2017.

I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue

THE award-winning game show I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue will be returning to the stage and coming to Margate Winter Gardens on February 4, 2017. Call 01843 292795 for tickets and information.



Rock and Sequins sequel

ROCK and Sequels at The Stiletto Club is coming to Gravesend's Guild Theatre on October 20-29.

The show is about a cabaret club in America, where the audience meet the club's performers.

For tickets, email boxoffice@gravesendtheatreguild.org

Clarke comes to Hadlow

INTERNATIONALLY applauded poet and playwright Graham Clarke will visit Hadlow College's Broadview Tearoom on November 23.

For tickets, contact Pat Crawford on 01622 618628



Stick Man storytelling

A storytelling of the Stick Man children's book will take place at Gravesend Library on October 24.

Families can come along and join one of the actors from Scamp Theatre as they read the story of Stick Man.

Further details are available on the library's website.



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rca@ruralcraftsassociation.co.uk www.ruralcraftsassociation.co.uk

The best of British jazz

BRITISH jazz musicians are coming together for a night at Folkestone's Tower Theatre on October 27.

The show claims to consist of "British jazz at its best". For tickets, call 01303 277175.



School teacher to wrestle

A CHRIST Church CE Academy in Folkestone primary school teacher will take part in South East Wrestling when comes to Hawkinge Community Centre on October 29.

Luis Lozano performs under the alias Will Power.

Visit www.southeastwrestling.co.uk.

Roig's Canterbury exhibit

A work by the internationally renowned artist Bernardi Roig is coming to Canterbury Festival from October 15 and will be open to the public for two weeks only.

Visit canterburyfestival.co.uk



The Woman in Black

SUSAN Hill's ghost story, The Woman In Black, comes alive in a theatre production that is coming to Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre from November 1-5.

In 2012, the story was released as a movie starring Daniel Radcliffe.

Tickets are from marlowetheatre.com

Communards' Sarah Jane Morris' new album

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

COMPARED to What is the title of singer, songwriter and performer Sarah Jane Morris' new album.

Having been a part of so many of The Communards' songs, Ms Morris' life has been dedicated to music.

Here, KoS speaks to the Kent-based musician about her new album and her love of the county.

Compared to What is the result of a friendship between Ms Morris and another performer, Antonio Forcione.

"Antonio and I had known each other for years. We'd both been asked to guest with Sarah Gillespie and went for a coffee afterward," she said.

"We realised we have a lot of commonalities and that we were interested to see what we could come up with together."

They influenced each other heavily, and found that their music together was complementary. Ms Morris said: "We wrote



most of the album in one day and then we both brought our own musicians to the table."

When it came to writing the lyrics for songs on Compared to What the duo used poems Ms Morris had written in her spare time.

"He asked me to read my poems aloud and then he created music to accompany," said Ms Morris, who lives near Canterbury. "A lot of my songs begin as poems."

With regards to the style, the album takes on various forms, added the singer: "It has acoustic,

soul, jazz, classical, and folk.

When we go out on stage, it can be just us two and it works."

The "thought-provoking" album covers controversial topics such as refugees, and sexual violence, as Ms Morris believes 'beautiful music is the best way to tell harrowing stories. The songs become a comfort zone.'

Compared to What will be officially released on October 26 following the preview given at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival from August 23-29.



DYNAMIC: The duo's work complements each other's



CONTROVERSIAL: Their album touches on various topics



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VELUX

'I'll always consider Jamie my boy' says Contaldo

Restaurateur Gennaro Contaldo talks about bread baking and his friendship with Jamie Oliver...

“post pictures every day – lots of people want to know where you are and what you're doing,” reasons Gennaro Contaldo, pouring his morning coffee with one hand and scrolling through his busy Twitter feed with the other.

“I find pleasure when I look on my Instagram, Twitter and Facebook; in a way I'm in touch with everyone, and I feel like its one big family,” he continues, inviting me to peer over his shoulder. “There's so many nice people in the world; I want to meet them all!”

Sitting in the garden of his East London home, the 67-year-old chef and restaurateur – credited as the

maestro who taught Jamie Oliver all he knows about Italian cooking – is in great spirits.

When he's not posing for selfies with his 13-year-old twins Olivia and Chloe the foodie splits his time between cooking demos on his popular YouTube channel, training chefs, TV work and penning cookbooks.

“I'm a person who has to move all the time,” he cries in that familiar accent. “As soon as I'm finished here, I'm going to Shepherd's Bush to see my chefs, and then I have a Facebook Live and then I have cookery school.”

Does he ever slow down?

“Slow down?” he retorts with a chuckle, serving me up a delicious slice of home-made olive oil cake with raspberry coulis, baked espe-



PASSIONATE: Gennaro Contaldo

cially for the occasion by his daughter Chloe.

“I'm my own worst enemy. When there's so many nice people, why do you want to slow down?” he continues.

His latest literary venture, Gennaro's Italian Bakery, pays homage to his lifelong passion for baking, recalling the hours spent as a young boy at his uncle's bakery in Minori on the Amalfi Coast, and memories of tucking into freshly baked bread in his family home.

“Everybody should make their own bread!” he enthuses, throwing his hands in the air.

“You can even go into a supermarket and buy a mix, just add water and bake it,” adds the chef, who left Italy for London aged 20. “The secret is to

use good flour, that's all.”

The foreword goes to his protege, Oliver.

“Jamie is incredible,” gushes Contaldo, who first met 41-year-old Oliver when he worked under him at London's Neal Street Restaurant in the Nineties. “When you show him how to do something the Italian way, he takes it in straight away; and when he does it, he does it better than me!”

While he's heavily involved with Oliver's ever-expanding Italian restaurant chain, creating dishes and training chefs, the veteran foodie's friendship with Oliver goes far beyond the kitchen.

“Jamie considers me his London father, and I'll always consider him my boy,” Contaldo confides.

Snow White the ballet

CLASSICAL ballet takes centre stage soon when the Vienna Festival Ballet Company performs at Sevenoaks' Stag Community Centre on October 26.

Vienna Festival Ballet will perform the fairy-tale Snow White, based on the traditional Brothers Grimm story.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.stagevenoaks.co.uk or calling 01732 450175.

Shane Richie cancels

DUE to an unforeseen filming schedule extension, Shane Richie has had to postpone his Margate tour date.

The Margate Winter Gardens box office will be contacting customers regarding refunds for the A Kick Up The 80s concert.

As we go to press there is no re-scheduled date confirmed for the show, which should have taken place on November 11.

Margate Winter Gardens apologises.

Fleetwood Mac are Bac

FLEETWOOD Mac are a Fleetwood Mac Tribute Band, and the only Mac tribute to replicate the classic Rumours line-up, and they're playing a gig at Deal's The Astor Community Theatre on October 29.

The show focuses on the Rumours era of the band and features several songs from the Peter Green days.

Tickets can be purchased from the box office on 01304 370220.

CD and record fair

MUSIC from the past and up to the present will be on sale on vinyl and CD with many special offers and collectors items.

Retailers from east Kent will be on hand with a selection of music.

The new café The Kitchen Table will be open on the day serving snacks and hot and cold drinks.

The fair will take place at Deal's Astor Theatre on November 27.

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Krakow & Zakopane Winter Wonders

By Air from Gatwick

28 November, 2016 - Quote: KZ11-KOS



Join us for a festive visit to Poland where Christmas is more traditional and your Pound goes further. We stay for two nights in Krakow, taking in the Christmas Market and all the sights this pretty city has to offer. We will also stay two nights in Zakopane, a picturesque winter sports resort in the Tatra Mountains, where the highlights of our trip will be: a Sleigh Party complete with a feast in a local tavern and an evening of entertainment from the local highlanders with music and dancing; plus a mountain railway ride.

INCLUDED: Return flights from Gatwick to Krakow - supp't may apply • Two nights' four-star accommodation at the Golden Tulip Hotel, Krakow • Two nights' three-star accommodation at the Hotel Sabala, Zakopane • A Folklore evening with dinner in Krakow • Sleigh Ride Party with feast in a tavern in Zakopane • Visit to the Tatra Mountains • Ride on the Gubalowka Funicular Railway • Transfers abroad • Escorted by a Tour Manager



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60s Sounds in Surrey

Thatcher's Hotel, Guildford

6 Jan, 10 Feb, 10 Mar & 14 Apr, 2017 - Quote: TG-KOS

ENJOY a fun-packed party break at this charming Tudor-style hotel near Guildford and close to The Hogs Back Brewery and Polesden Lacey, an Edwardian country house and estate. Entertainment on 6 Jan 2017 is by Fortunes lead singer Eddie Mooney and Glen Leon as Tom Jones - £129pp; 10 Feb 2017 features The Beatle (Fab Four tribute) & comedy singer Ian Larkin - £139pp; 10 Mar 2017 with Roy Carter (ex-Drifters & Foundations) and Dave Grant (ex-Paper Lace) - £139pp; also 14 Apr 2017 (Easter) with the Frankie Valli Story & singing duo Bus Stop - £159pp.

INCLUDED: Entertainment both nights • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV, tea/coffee tray and free wifi • Free parking



8 days
full board
from
£1099_{pp}

Madeira Flower Festival

By Air from Gatwick

1 May, 2017 - Quote: FM5-KOS

Free
Drinks
Excursions
included

In Madeira Springtime is honoured with a Flower Festival held every year after Easter. Festivities begin with the building of the 'The Wall of Hope'. Over 1,000 children place one flower each on the wall to symbolise hope. The next day dozens of floral floats take part in the Flower Parade while local artists build amazing floral carpets. Included excursions take in the best of the island.

INCLUDED: Return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • Seating for the Flower Parade • 3 half days and 1 full-day excursion • 7 nights stay at a 4-star hotel in Funchal • 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches & 7 dinners from the buffet, plus afternoon coffee and cake • Drinks included with lunch and dinner - aperitifs, local spirits, wine, beer and soft drinks • Entertainment some evenings • Transfers abroad • Services of our representative in resort



Sounds of the 60s Summer Seaside Party

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk Coast

Self-Drive • Friday, 7 July, 2017 - Quote: PA7-KOS

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Entertainment
Over 40s only
£10pp deposit

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1		2		3			4	5		6		7
					8							
9												
10								11				
	12			13			14					
15						16						17
18						19		20				
21												
22							23					

Across

1 Writing

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 4. Cruel (6) | 22. Irksome (6) | 7. Hearken (6) |
| 9. Highbrows (13) | 23. Glimpse (6) | 8. Poor (5) |
| 10. Cautious (7) | | 13. Old (7) |
| 11. Follow (5) | Down | 15. Portray (6) |
| 12. Bisect (5) | 1. Cower (6) | 16. Earlier (5) |
| 14. Begin (5) | 2. Excessively (13) | 17. Dive (6) |
| 18. Precise (5) | 3. Substantial (5) | 20. Weak (5) |

Across

1. iii

1. It's easy to include an account in the documentary system (6)
4. Vegetable to shoot up (6)
9. Mail carriers (6-7)
10. Look in untidy chest for apparel (7)
11. Put on fat before the meal is ready! (5)
12. The last of the climbers successfully handle the range (5)
14. Thomas comes from Sandy Lane (5)
18. Chain-makers (5)
19. Neat attendant (7)
21. It's assumed by those who have taken orders (8,5)
22. Pinpointing a location and taking aim, one hears (6)
23. Victor hasn't been chastised (6)

Down

1. Country giving monetary unit final direction (6)
2. By which people in general are in agreement (6,7)
3. The French cry of disgust or an expression of merriment (5)
5. Irresponsible man about town or juvenile actor? (7)
6. Finished with a declaration showing exaggeration (13)
7. Ornamental hanging slates rearranged (6)
8. Sailor to employ revilement (5)
13. The suffering of one coming in to die (7)
15. Establishments for soft, frilly materials (6)
16. Fight for a morsel (5)
17. No bias upset inventive American (6)
20. Scotch border near the west (5)

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.

	17			25			7			9			26			
4	3	12	23			19	7	14	6	1	19					22
	8			21	12	16			7			18	12	6		
	4		6			2	8	14	19			17				19
10	15	8	3	14			7									6
	2				8	7	11	8	17	S	8	24	3	19		
	3				17		8		8	I			8			
17	18	7	2	15	19	2	8	10					17			
19							19			26	7	12	2	17		
8			12			5	25	14	19		25			19		
20	8		13			8			11	25	7		7			
19			19	16	10	6	17	19			7	19	19	14		
			7			19			7		18		1			

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Henry IV character		Region of China		Happiness		Pointed comment	
Lady singer				Meadow			
		Snooker pole				Baby	
Fisher, actress		Throw		Decline Horse coat colour			
Journey Poke					Cow's noise		Item of neckwear
			Leave out				
Young next		New Zealand					
			Not one				

Enter your answers in the direction indicated by the arrows.

Find where ships shown below are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some of the squares have been filled to start you off.

THE FLEET
1 x Battleship
2 x Cruiser
3 x Destroyer
4 x Submarine



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A											1
B											4
C											2
D											2
E											2
F											2
G											2
H											2
I											2
J											1
	1	2	3	0	6	1	2	4	1	1	

1				2			3
	9				10		
		14				15	
8							11
				16			4
		13				12	
7				6			5

Starting from 1, fill in the grid clockwise with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next to reveal the key word in the shaded boxes.

1. Lion's cry
 2. Inclined surface
 3. Ode
 4. Encounter
 5. Streetcar
 6. Is obliged to
 7. Melt
 8. Moderately hot
 9. Castle surround
 10. Roman garment
 11. Slightly open
 12. Moneyed
 13. Group of cattle
 14. Entrance
 15. Flightless bird
 16. Vertex
- Keyword clue:** A Welsh town

			1		4			
		5	9		8	7		
	1						6	
2		4				3		6
6		1				4		5
	8						2	
		6	7		1	9		
			4		5			

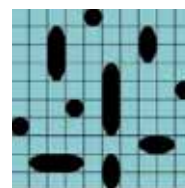
			3		9	6		
	8	5	4	1				
3			5				8	
4				3		1	2	9
	9		6				7	
7	5	2			8			3
	2				7			4
				4	1	8		
		4	2		3			6

Code word
1-R, 2-T, 3-L, 4-G,
5-M, 6-U, 7-N, 8-I,
9-J, 10-C, 11-V,
12-H, 13-P, 14-D,
15-F, 16-X, 17-S,
18-T, 19-E, 20-Z,
21-W, 22-B, 23-K,
24-F

Spiral
1-Roar, 2-Ramp, 3-
Peep, 4-Meet, 5-
Team, 6-Must, 7-Thaw;
8-Warm, 9-Moat, 10-
Toga, 11-Afar, 12-Rich;
13-Heed, 14-Door,
15-Road, 16-Aper,
17-Key word: Wrexham

Double Crossword
Cryptic
Across: 9 Armour;
4 Faille;
1 Dytar; 10 Cloches;
11 Baste; 12 Scoops;
14 Dytar; 18 Links;
19 Cowbird; 21
Clirical dress; 22
Down: 23 Beaten;
24 Sling; 25 Flacien;
3 Lught; 5 Playboy;
6 Overstatement;
7 Passel; 8 Abuse;
13
Parrison; 15 Places;
20
Quick
Across: 1 Crease; 4
Intellectuals;
11 Guarded; 11 Ensur;
18 Exact; 19 Rehusal;
21 Interrogation; 22
Tyming; 23 Glance.

Sudoku - Hard



Battleships

Sudoku - Easy

E	T	F	N	O	N	E
I	F	M	A	O	R	I
T	B	A	O	M	I	T
		O	U	R	A	
		S	L	A	E	B
		L	C	U	E	R
		A	G	A	L	E
		F	M	G	B	

Arrowsword

One in a million

NATALIE SADLER and her family sample the delights of skiing in glamorous Courchevel

It boasts a heated pavement and its main streets are littered with designer names including Dior, Prada and Chanel. Courchevel is, quite literally, a millionaire's playground. But it is not just the shops and fine dining that attract the wealthy. The ski area is, hands down, one of the best in Europe. Not that this was entirely obvious as we set off from the Chalet Hotel Crystal 2000 on day one of our family ski holiday – the visibility was poor and we could barely see the lift. The fog clung on for the first

few days but I did find some light relief down in Le Tania, while my husband took his skis to neighbouring Meribel and Val Thorens. Then, on day four, we were treated to some of the best snow conditions we have ever experienced. Hovering over the snow drifts, crossing between runs, slipping on and off piste, for the first time since taking it up six years ago, I felt like a true boarder and could appreciate why Courchevel is so popular. We opted for the family-friendly Crystal 2000 hotel, operated by Esprit, which best suited our needs and budget.

Esprit offer a complete holiday package from playrooms at the airport to kid-friendly meals, milk-warming facilities and our hotel had its own soft play area. You can build your own childcare package, with full-day nursery care for tiny ones and escorted ski lessons for first-time skiers to baby listening services at night and a late-night Cocoa Club for older kids. At eight, my step-daughter was more interested in skiing

with us. We did, however, take advantage of the snow ranger service and lunch club, dropping her off after breakfast to give us four hours to explore and find the best runs for her to join us in the afternoon. One for little skiers is the Indians, where you stop off at the tepee and toast marshmallows. She loved it. ■ A week-long stay + flights, breakfast, tea and evening meal at the Chalet Hotel Crystal 2000 costs from £759 per adult, with discounts for children. Childcare packages are extra.



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Ray Duff fan club member writes...

THE latest letter from Ray Duff shows him to be all ill informed as usual. Nowhere in the act which authorised the referendum was it stated that it was to be merely advisory. This is a canard circulated by the losers in the wake of the vote.

It is also untenable to claim that a majority of youngsters supported remaining in the EU, as on what does Mr Duff base this claim? If he is relying on opinion polls he should note that the latter were wrong about the last general election, wrong about the referendum and recently wrong about the national vote in Columbia. One might as well rely on an astrologer as on these charlatans.

It is not surprising that Mr Duff loves the EU so much as its anti democratic ethos is a perfect fit with his. Once we are free and an independent country once more I would wager that Mr Duff's inane belief that there would be a clamour to return will prove to be absolute nonsense.

Colin Bullen,
Tonbridge

Is this Ray's final say on matter?

IN final reply, for now, to the Brexiters, I assume S Reeves (KoS, letters last week) means the economy when talking of supposed shot down views.

However, whilst that has been reasonably good it's largely because we haven't left the EU yet! But when Mrs May announced the Article 50 date, the pound plunged by 31 percent and has struggled since. This may help exports for a while, but import costs are already rising leading to the Tesco/Unilever spat, which is just the beginning.

Now Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of England, has clearly warned the low-income will be "hard hit" in 2017 due to rising prices and inflation, or is that a 'weak' view?

I also don't suppose chancellor Hammond will help the above by unfreezing benefits, compensate for past losses and restore the link to RPI from CPI; or that S Reeves will support such?

Mr Hudson-Gool says all legal attempts will fail and that we'll trade our way to success. But the first was dashed when the courts told the government that MPs must have full oversight of any negotiations and it's likely more such challenges will succeed not least those from Scotland and Northern Ireland.

On trade, given we have a huge trade gap and far too large and usually low paid, services sector, it



Why no fuss over plan to extend port works?

WHAT appears to be an attempt to slip quietly under the radar, Brett Cement and Aggregates at Ramsgate Port plan to expand their operations there by building a concrete batching plant to add to their existing facilities.

In any normal town, under any normal council, such a serious undertaking involving construction, noise, dust and traffic increase would be a matter for serious concern requiring at the very least a public consultation but apparently the council has not even considered it necessary for Brett to apply for planning permission. Now this is strange, because when Brett's undertook similar work in Ashford, they had to go through the whole process of applying for planning permission and face the hostility of the local community.

For those people who may think that this is a fuss over nothing may I take the opportunity to point out that any development of heavy industry in the port area will be to

the future detriment of Ramsgate's seafront.

How can Ramsgate develop as a place to live and visit in the future if we allow our harbour area to become the choice site for Kent's dirty industries? There have been serious plans afoot to regenerate the area for some time.

Both Kent County Council and TDC appear not to be in the least bit bothered by Brett's plans, plans which cannot fail to have lasting effects on the wildlife of Pegwell Bay. I find it hard to believe that the residents of Westcliff are willing to stand by and do nothing to protect their environment. I would also like to know what our locally elected Ukipp councillors are going to do about this! Surely they're not so disinterested in where they live in as to stand by and let KCC and TDC 'unelected' officials run roughshod over all of us? Our town deserves better than this!

H Frencken
Ramsgate

hugely moved on since then so how will he get all the sold off public utilities back along with private firms like Cadburys? Britain has no laws against firms being sold off in their entirety, whilst even the US has laws against such.

Further, Mrs May has blundered by giving a Brexit start date because an interim trade deal for immediately after 2019 is likely lost, so full trade talks with the EU can again only come after the initial two years which are only about the terms of withdrawal anyway. Also, the people and MPs may not be able to decide if the offer is in our interests or not.

As for the so-called Great Reform Bill which is to incorporate current EU laws. It is likely to be undemocratic since it will also include 'secondary legislation', which means governments could then largely bypass parliamentary scrutiny; at the behest of lobbying big businesses et al; to remove such laws including eventually, most likely, workers' rights.

So I leave them with the final thought that, having mentioned Lord Sugar's view last time, it'll probably be the Brexiters who in the end will rightly be told 'you're fired!'.

Ray Duff,
Folkestone

All hail support for carriage help

TWO dignitaries, one his worshipfulness the town mayor of Dover, Neil Rix, and Dover town councillor Graham Wanstall, are to be given recognition for keeping on track a project to restore, for the second time, a coach top of the former 1890 Leas lift step carriage.

Sadly, one's personal money that had been set aside to restore this piece of Folkestone's heritage has run out due to so many hurdles cropping up.

The mayor has contributed scaffolding freely for a number of weeks. Without this generosity, the project would have failed. Mayor Rix has a heart of gold.

Cllr Wanstall has offered a substantial sum of money to ensure the coach top does not hit the buffers while the works are ongoing at Elham Valley Railway Museum at Peene in Newington.

If one was living in the areas these two councillors represent, you'd have my vote for life.

Robert Mouland,
Folkestone

Walk to school to keep kids fitter

SIXTEEN years ago there had never been a single case of a child being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes in the UK. BBC's Panorama revealed there are now more than 500 cases – and rising.

October is International Walk to School Month and as walk to school rates hit a dangerous low point and child health problems increase, maybe we should take note.

Walking more can lead to improved physical and mental health, including reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes.

Catchment areas can be an issue but park and stride – swapping school gate gridlock for parking further away and taking a short walk instead – means children can still get active for part of the journey.

Tim Fitches,
Living Streets

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- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to North & West

people living in the county.

- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.
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Margate harbour
by **Brian Summers**
from **Faversham**

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Alfa's bambino now reborn

PREVIEW: Italian sporting marque's most junior model gets a facelift to match up with the newest additions to the line-up...

CULT Italian sporting brand Alfa Romeo has revised its most junior model, the Mito supermini. The racy little Mito (from £12,960) gets revamped styling, more technology and a new look range of trim levels.

Admittedly, the Mito is getting long in the tooth, but the car's looks stand out from a very humdrum crowd thanks to elements culled from Alfa's legendary 8C supercar and 'mini-supercar' 4C.

Added to that is the car's engaging drive and handling, aided by the DNA mode adjustment for the steering, throttle and chassis: Dynamic is for roads where you can enjoy the drive, Normal is for most other situations, and All-weather is a 'get you home' setting that helps the car cope with icy or treacherous conditions.

However, remember that this is a small sporting hatchback, so it comes only in three-door format and the ride is on the firm side.

Visually, the car has new sports grilles, wheel designs, and detailing, plus upgraded upholstery and finishes; much of the new exterior style brings the car into line with the newest Alfas - the dramatic new Giulia saloon and estate.

The junior diesel option is revised too: the 1.3-litre JTDM-2 turbodiesel joins the range with an increased output of 95hp but lower CO2 emissions of just 89g/km



It also gets the FIAT group's latest Uconnect Live system - with DAB and Bluetooth connectivity - for pairing with your phone, and accessing streamed music and the Web.

Standard kit includes 16-inch alloys, satin chrome-effect exterior detailing, air con, DNA, rear

spoiler and a Uconnect five-inch touchscreen.

There is plenty of powertrain choice too, from the entry level 78hp 1.4-litre petrol, lively 105hp 875cc TwinAir petrol turbo, aforementioned diesel, up to the scorching Mito Veloce flagship (£20,500) with a 170hp 1.4 MultiAir petrol unit (0-62mph in 7.3 seconds).

North & West

kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk

The Toyota that sparked a 'RAVolution'

The world's No1 car brand's radical and sporty take on the 4x4 formula created a whole new market sector that just grew and grew writes **Steve Loader...**

TOYOTA revitalized the current generation RAV4 this year with a new look.

The world's No1 car brand also claimed that offering a RAV hybrid option for the first time was the car's most significant move since 1994, when the original created the sports utility vehicle (SUV) or 'soft-roader' sector.

This 'Recreational Active Vehicle with 4-wheel drive' was a sensation, sparking a 'RAVolution' that other manufacturers simply had to join.

Toyota quickly had to double production, and customers soon demanded a five-door option as well as the original three-door model.

With its small size, grippy all-wheel drive and big tyres, the new car had everyday usability and affordability plus 'funky chunky' off-road looks that was becoming fashionable at the time.

Four generations on, it has sub-brand status: asked what car he or she drives, a RAV4 owner will usually say 'a RAV' rather than Toyota.

Though smaller than a proper 4x4, it has also proved no less rugged: 90 per cent of all the RAV4s built are still on the road.

But success has a downside: lots of wannabe competition. Its youthful



appeal may have been surrendered too, in favour of pleasing a wider audience or keeping original fans happy as they age, so dimensions and practicality have grown at the expense of compactness and sportiness.

But the car has loyal fans and the newly revamped fourth generation

car (from £23,695) is both sleeker and more practical than ever, with more boot space, a fully flat load floor with seats folded, plus generous under floor storage.

It has a lifting tailgate, which people prefer for easy loading and as a rain shelter, particularly when 'grandstanding' at rural events.



The rear now seats three in comfort too, with generous leg and headroom and a virtually flat floor, allowing all rear passengers to scoot across easily and alight either side.

The latest car also appears even more rock solid, to go with its legendary reliability, while handling remains sure-footed, body roll is

Toyota RAV4 Icon 2WD 2.0L diesel manual

Price:	from £29,090
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Mazda CX-5

well-controlled on corners, and ride quality is forgiving enough to make the latest RAV a good all-rounder.

The new powertrain line-up comprises 2.5-litre hybrid (from £28,020), smooth new 2.0-litre D-4D diesel (as tested) and revised 2.0-litre Valvematic petrol (from £31,085) and in front-wheel and all-wheel drive versions.

The revised RAV now has styling closer to mainstream Toyota cars; yes, some ruggedness has been lost, but there is more class.

And safety kit has been enhanced with a £695 package of integrated active safety and driver assistance features, including Lane Departure Alert, Automatic High Beam, and Pre-Collision System, which alerts the driver to risk of a collision, prepares the brakes to deliver extra stopping power and, if the driver fails to react, brakes automatically.

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or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is noon Friday 4th November 2016.

Interviews for this post will be held on 30th November 2016.

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Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

For an application pack, please write to/telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):

Mrs Linda Taylor, School Business Manager
Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP
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Please note CV's will **NOT** be accepted.

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003:

Application for Premises Licence

CC'S Eateries Ltd CC'S, 32 Station Road, Westgate on Sea, Kent CT8 8QY has applied to Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent for the Grant of a Premises Licence under the Licensing Act 2003.

A copy of the application may be inspected during normal office hours at the Thanet District Council offices, address above.

The licensable activities will be Supply of Alcohol from 10:00 to 23:30 hours every day; Films, Live and Recorded Music and Performances of Dance from 08:00 to 23:30 hours every day; Late Night Refreshment from 23:00 to 00:00 hours every day.

All Licensable activities to continue on New Year's Eve from the end of Permitted Hours to the beginning of Permitted hours on New Year's Day.

Any representations in respect of the application should be made in writing to the Licensing Department, Thanet District Council, P.O. Box 9 Cecil Street, Margate, Kent by 11th November 2016. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5000.

Marine Management Organisation (MMO)

Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (2009 c23)

Consultation on proposed byelaw for prohibiting bottom towed fishing gear

The purpose of the proposed byelaw is to protect two specified areas of sandbank in Margate and Long Sands Site of Community Importance (SCI).

Copies of the draft byelaw, draft byelaw impact assessment and accompanying marine protected area assessment (including maps and coordinates of the areas, and questions to consider) are available from the MMO website www.gov.uk/guidance/marine-conservation-byelaws#current-mmo-byelaws or by calling 0300 123 1032, emailing conservation@marinemangement.org.uk, or from one of the following locations:

MMO Lowestoft, Pakefield Road, Lowestoft, NR33 0HT

Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Paragon House, Albert Street, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9HD or The Sail Loft, Shipyard Estate, Brightlingsea, Essex CO7 0AR

Any person wishing to make representations must do so by 12 December 2016. Please send comments in writing to conservation@marinemangement.org.uk or to the Marine Conservation Team, Marine Management Organisation, Lancaster House, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7YH.

LICENSING ACT 2003:

Application for Premises Licence

Never Board Limited, trading as Playopolis are applying for a new premises licence at 2 Star Hill, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1UX. Our application has been made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR.

We are applying for the following licensable activities; the Sale of Alcohol (9am – 11pm); and the provision of Late Night Refreshment (9am – 10.30pm).

Should you wish to make representations to the council it must be in writing and/or you can view our application by contacting the council on 01634 337107 or 337108 by 13th November 2016.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

For more information contact Licensing Unit by telephone: Licensing Services - 01634 337107 or 337108 /

Enforcement - 01634 337112 or 337106 or by email: licensing@medway.gov.uk

Write to: Licensing Unit, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR

LICENSING ACT 2003:

Variation of Premises Licence

Take notice that Marek Szandrocha has made an application in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 for a variation to the premises licence for Kingsajz Polish Delicatessen, 346c High Street, Chatham, ME4 4NP, Kent.

The application is for remove condition 6, amend condition 1 and amend condition 3.

This application has been made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR. Full details of the application and plans can be viewed at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR during normal hours of business.

Any interested party who wishes to make a representation about this application should do so in writing to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR or by sending an email to licensing@medway.gov.uk no later than 17 November 2016.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application which, upon conviction, carries a maximum fine of £5,000.

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Adams departs as Kent head coach

Former West Indies star is leaving after five years in county

Cricket

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

KENT have announced that head coach Jimmy Adams is leaving the club.

The former West Indies Test star is returning to Jamaica after five years in the county, most recently helping guide Kent to a second placed finish in division two of the county championship.

Adams has also had a big influence in developing homegrown talent at the club such as Daniel Bell-Drummond and captain Sam Northeast.

"I've enjoyed my time at Kent which has been a great learning experience for me," the 48-year-old said.

"I wanted to be involved in a club that was seeking to grow and I am fortunate to have found that here at Kent over the past five seasons.

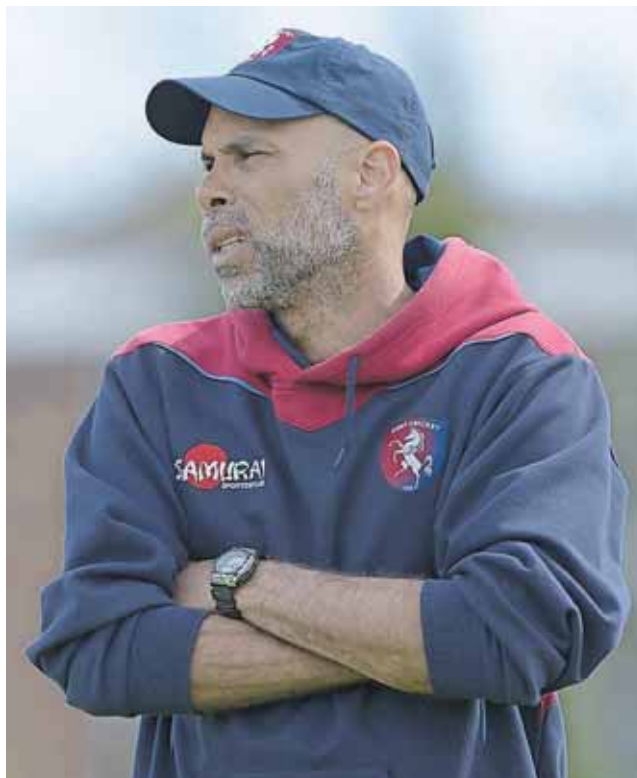
"It's been a delight being involved with all our players as they have developed during the period and especially watching the younger players who have made the step up to first class level.

"Working with the club to develop a stronger support team to back up our players has also been a highlight for me.

"I'm extremely grateful for the members and supporters who have consistently backed me, the team and the club's overall vision."

Chairman George Kennedy added: "We thank Jimmy for his fine service of the club and wish him all the best for the future.

"His commitment to developing Kentish cricket talent is shown by the



LEAVING: Jimmy Adams

core of homegrown players now at the heart of our professional squad."

Meanwhile, the club recently wrote a letter to the ECB, after Mr Kennedy said he felt the club was dealt "an unfair hand" after not being considered for promotion.

"We can confirm receipt of a letter from Kent county cricket club regard-

ing the issue of promotion and relegation," an ECB spokesperson said in response.

"The decision was in line with the two-down, one-up relegation and promotion rules for this season's county championship which were notified to all counties and published prior to start of the 2016 season."

Shakey clinches record fifth superbike crown

Superbike

SHANE 'Shakey' Byrne clinched a record fifth British Superbike Championship title last weekend – on his home circuit, Brands Hatch.

The Sittingbourne rider was the favourite going into the final round some 17 points ahead of closest rival Leon Haslam, but having missed out on the crown last year, he knew he couldn't take anything for granted.

A pair of sixth places in the opening two races was enough to secure the title, before finishing third in the final race, meaning he ended the campaign 29 points clear of the chasing pack.

Meanwhile, Sidcup's Josh Wainwright admitted his breakthrough season in the championship had



WINNER: Shane Byrne's fifth title. Photo: Simon Hildrew

been "a dream come true". The 26-year-old crashed on a

difficult weekend, but told KoS this week just how much he has learned over the last few months.

"For me this year has been great in that I've been given a chance to step up and compete against my idols," he said.

"It's been a dream come true, I've learned so much and I feel I've come on leaps and bounds."

Currently riding for the Lloyd & Jones/PR Racing team, Wainwright has other offers on the table, but wants to remain loyal if he can.

"My team have given me such an opportunity this season and I want to wait to hear from them first," he said.

"Then I'll start to find out what I can do next year but it's looking promising."

Sport Shorts

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Gills paired with non-league side in FA Cup

GILLINGHAM'S FA Cup campaign will kick off against the team that knocked them out of the competition three years ago – non-league Brackley Town.

Justin Edinburgh's side will be looking to avoid a repeat when the teams meet again on November 5, with the Gills' recent FA Cup record relatively poor, having not reached the second round since 2013.

Three other Kent teams were also in the hat during the draw on Monday.

Dartford's reward for a commanding 3-0 win over local rivals Tonbridge Angels was a tie with Sutton United, who were promoted from the National League South last season.

Elsewhere, Dover Athletic were drawn away to Cambridge United and Maidstone United will welcome Rochdale to the Gallagher Stadium.

Meanwhile, Margate boss Nikki Bull made a rare appearance on the pitch for his side's replay against Harrow Borough on Tuesday night, but couldn't prevent the Gate from crashing out of the competition as they lost 1-3 at Hartsdown Park.



BOSS: Justin Edinburgh



CHAMPIONS: Ryan Charlwood and Ricky Stevens

Back-to-back sidecar titles for Charlwood

DOVER'S Ryan Charlwood and teammate Ricky Stevens clinched their second successive British F1 Sidecar title at Brands Hatch at the weekend.

Arriving at the Kent circuit with a comfortable 47-point lead, the pair could have been forgiven for taking their foot off the gas somewhat, but Charlwood insisted there was no danger of that.

"Obviously we always race to win but we had to race tactically this weekend," he said.

"We felt confident and relatively relaxed going into the first race on Saturday.

"There was a couple of other teams gunning for the title so our main aim was to finish each race, preferably on the podium, and that would put us in good stead to bag the championship."

Royal welcome for Olympic stars

KENT'S Olympic stars spent an evening with the Royal Family after thousands paid tribute to Team GB's sporting heroes this week.

Among the county's representatives at parades in Manchester and London was Orpington sprinter Dina Asher-Smith, who claimed a bronze medal in the 4x100 relay in Brazil.

The 20-year-old said she was "totally honoured" and told support-

ers on social media: "Your support honestly means the world to us and it was great to be able to say thank you in person. We had such a blast."

Hockey heroine Maddie Hinch, who saved all four Dutch penalties in the Rio final to secure gold for the Great Britain women's side, faced a race against time to make the event after her flight from Amsterdam was cancelled only hours before.

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